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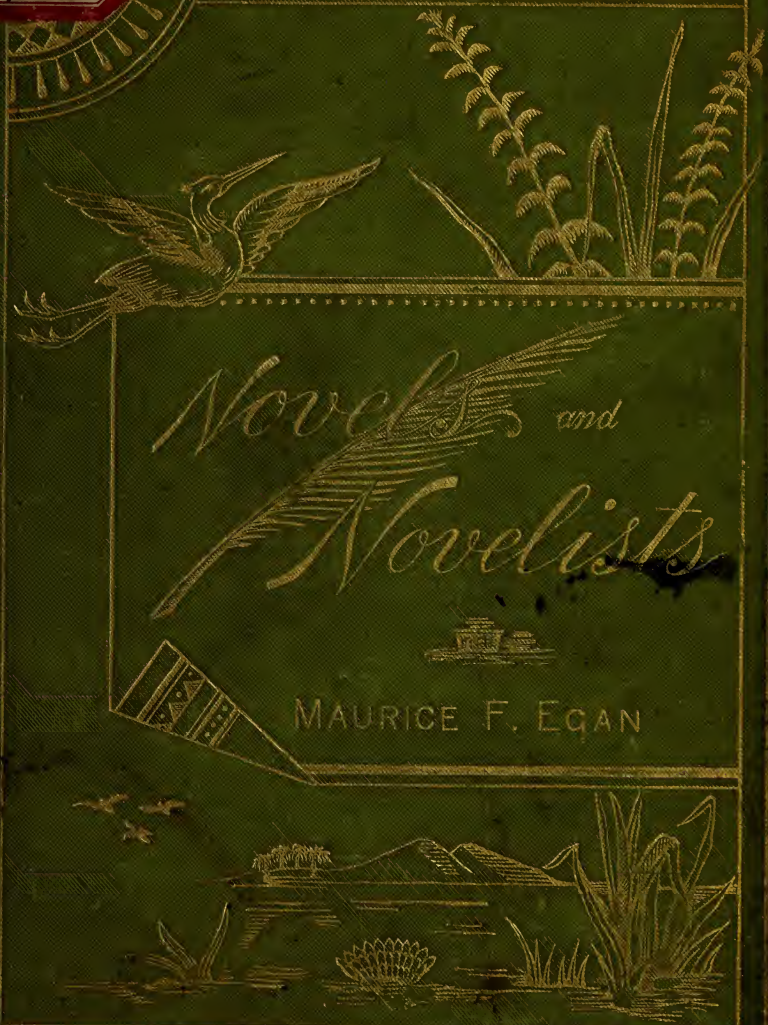

Novels and Novelists

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MODERN

NOVELS AND NOVELISTS

A Book of Criticisms

BY

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN, A.M

NEW YORK

WILLIAM H. SADLIER

11 BARCLAY STREET

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THIS BOOK

IS

RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

Dedicated

TO

His Grace, the Most Reverend

MICHAEL AUGUSTINE CORRIGAN, D.D.

Archbishop of New York.

700118

PREFACE.

THE author of "Modern Novels and Novelists" is anxious that his young friends—wandering in gardens of romance which in these days are particularly pleasant and alluring—shall have a guide who will warn them against the weeds growing among the flowers of the fictive art, and who will also, in a critical-botanical way, dissect the highest products of the gardener's work. This guide—the author humbly offers himself for that position—wants to teach one lesson thoroughly: that thoughtless and indiscriminate novel-reading is to the soul what opium is to all the faculties.

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MODERN NOVELS AND NOVELISTS.

I.

THE way of the American novelist is not easy. It is true that the incomes of writers seem to be better than they used to be, and that the Bohemian, out at elbows and out of pocket, is now rare. Nevertheless authors do not earn much from the sale of their novels printed in book-form. The English competition is too great. When a man can buy the latest noted English novel for twenty cents, why should he spend a dollar or a dollar and a half for an American work of fiction? Publishers on this side of the Atlantic have only to reprint the works of English writers and to fill the news-stands with them. They are obliged to pay no royalty to the author, as we all know. Haggard's *She*, for instance, which is just now the most popular current novel, may bring the author a few pounds sterling from the Messrs. Harper & Bros. Outside of what they pay him he will receive nothing for his book.

Similarly, General Lew Wallace's *Ben-Hur* is printed, mutilated, by a London publishing firm. It is probable that he will get no royalty on the large sales of his book. In the United States the success of this novel has been phenomenal. Here his profits have been large. General Wallace is one of the few—very few—American writers who could exist decently without the magazines or literary syndicates.

As novels—after the newspapers—are more read in this year of our Lord than any other form of thought or thoughtlessness put into printed words, the effect of the deluge of English stories cannot be favorable to the growth of robust American ideas. There is a greater danger than that "spread-eagleism" which made the American a theme for amusement. And this danger is that our young people will become impregnated with ideas of life unsuited to their condition, and filled with the desire of imitating not only English manners and customs, but English ways of looking at social problems.

English manners and customs are generally very good —when they are not low-bred and cockney. And if our American hostesses who give dinners choose to send their guests to table arranged according to the rules of English precedence, who shall find fault? Where the American citizen is, there is the head of the table—even if it be the foot. If young ladies begin to look with scorn on the corn-fields and pumpkin crops of their native land, and long for the green lanes and picturesque coppices painted by English writers, it does not make them worthy of severe criticism. But it shows that the sentiment of patriotism is weakened at the root. The American who has not the feeling of love for the little things of his native land may be willing to sacrifice much for her, but his sacrifice will always lack the fervor and spontaneity of the men who love Scottish moors, Irish bogs, or English lanes with a tenderness that, in comparison, makes the luxuriance of the tropics seem bleak and colorless. Until Americans feel this their patriotism will always seem to be boastful in spite of its sincerity, and half-hearted in spite of its strength. The novels invest the English squire, the vicar, the curates, and the lady of the manor with a glamor of the light that never was on sea or land. The young

American woman fixes her eyes on that delightful country where men can play lawn-tennis all the afternoon, where five-o'clock tea is a leisurely prelude to dinner, and where titles are possible. The young American of the male sex, who gets his views from newspaper correspondence and such novels as he reads, calculates in pounds and shillings and regrets that "they cawn't make good claret-cup in this country."

These are only surface indications. They probably show nothing servile or imitative at heart. But, as the novels of a country are as effective as the ballads used to be, it would be well if the American author were saved from extinction by the protection of a law which would at the same time protect his English brother from constant robbery.

Luska: "Yoke of the Thorah."

Two late American novels are the work of young men —Sydney Luska (Henry Harland) and H. C. Bunner. Sydney Luska made a success in his novel of Hebrew New York life, *As It Was Written.* He followed with an inferior book, *Mrs. Peixada.* His third volume is called *The Yoke of the Thorah.*

It is the best of his novels. It is intensely local. Mr. Luska has saturated himself with the life of New York. He loves its movement, he has found its picturesqueness, its romance, its charm. The river at Blackwell's Island does not remind him of any foreign place. He is satisfied to look from the street on its wonderful beauty at sunset without longing to be anywhere else. He has made us interested in the brown-stone fronts of the streets in the Sixties, and he does not disdain to use the University Place cars as conveyances for the fortunes of his characters. And all sane-minded people, who ought by this time

to be weary of the flood of frothy English stories, must be thankful for it.

The "thorah" is the unwritten Jewish law supplementing the Ten Commandments, and Talmudic rather than Scriptural. The man who suffers under the yoke of this law is a young Hebrew artist, Elias Bacharach. He has fallen in love with a young girl, the daughter of a customer, whose portrait he has undertaken to paint. He lives with his uncle, a New York rabbi, who is anything but a liberal Jew, and his nephew has a wholesome fear of him. Elias feels that his belief—or rather his superstition, for Mr. Luska does not dignify Elias' scruples with the name of faith—puts an impassable barrier between him and the lady of his thoughts. It does not strike anybody in the book that either Mr. Redwood or his daughter, who are Protestants, will object to a Jew. Christine Redwood, whose education has been received in the New York Normal School, is without prejudices. Her father amiably says:

"Well, Mr. Bacharach, though you *are* a Hebrew, you're white; and anyhow religion don't worry us much in this household, and never did. I'm a Universalist myself, and Chris—well, I guess no one knows what she is. One thing's certain; she might have gone further and fared worse—she might, for a fact. You're a perfect gentleman, and you can't help it if you were born a Jew."

Elias' uncle, the rabbi, takes a different view of it. He reads from a German manuscript a portion of a sermon delivered on mixed marriages by Elias Bacharach's great-grandfather, expressing the sense of the "thorah":

"The anger of the Most High shall single him out. His cup shall be filled to the brim with gall and wormwood. The light of the sun shall be extinguished for him. A curse shall rest upon him and upon all that concerns him. His wife shall become a sore in his flesh. With a scolding tongue she shall beshrew him. As a wanton she shall shame him. His worldly affairs shall not prosper. Mis-

fortune and calamity shall follow him wherever he goes. Whatsoever he puts his hand to shall fail. An old man, homeless and friendless, he shall beg his bread from door to door. His intelligence shall decay. He shall be pointed out and jeered at as a fool that drivels and chatters. His health shall break. His bones shall rot in his body. His eyes shall become running ulcers in their sockets. His blood shall dry up, a fiery poison in his veins."

This denunciation gives Elias the "cold shivers," as he expresses it. Still, he continues to resolve that he will marry Christine. On the night before the intended marriage he tells the rabbi that he will marry a Goy. Goy, by the way, is the term applied by the German Jews to all not of their own race. In the rabbi Mr. Luska means to paint an exceptionably orthodox Jew. In a note explaining this he says:

"It is a curious circumstance, however, that, in the majority of cases, those very Jews who have cast quite loose from their Judaism, and proclaim themselves 'free-thinkers,' 'agnostics,' or what not, retain their prejudice against intermarriage, and even their superstitions anent its consequences."

The rabbi calmly tells Elias that the marriage cannot come off. He dogs his nephew's footsteps all the day before the evening of the ceremony, and he insists on accompanying the expectant bridegroom to Mr. Redwood's house. The rabbi is a terribly grim personage, a mixture of Poe's raven and a silent Ancient Mariner. He predicts a grievous calamity, and he is determined to see it take place. The state of the bridegroom's mind may be imagined from this pleasant snatch of dialogue as he drives off accompanied by the persistent rabbi:

"'At a church?' questioned the rabbi.
"'No; at their house,' replied Elias.
"'A large affair? Many guests?'
"'Very few. Perhaps twenty-five or thirty.'
"'That's good. It would be a pity to have a crowd.'"

No wonder Elias feels uncomfortable. The house is reached. The minister is ready. The bridal pair, surrounded by "young girls in bright colors and young men in white waistcoats and swallowtails," are waiting. Then the triumph of the rabbi comes. Elias is struck by an epileptic fit. The rabbi takes him home, and when he recovers he bears the "yoke of the thorah" meekly and jilts Christine Redwood. Altogether, Elias Bacharach is one of the weakest and most despicable personages among all the weak and despicable heroes presented to us by the novelists. He does not seem to have any convictions, except on the subject of music. He drops the heroine without much remorse, because he is afraid—so afraid that his fear results in a fit—of the tribulations prophesied by the rabbi. If Mr. Luska had represented him as torn by an agonizing struggle between principle, or even prejudice founded on principle, and affection for a "Goy," there would have been some element of nobility in Elias Bacharach's character. As he stands he is a weak-minded personage, capable of being superstitious, but incapable of strong faith. Having broken off the match, the rabbi —for we cannot help holding that determined Jew responsible for the epileptic fit—proceeds to marry Elias to a more suitable *partie*. He is introduced to the Kochs, the Blums, and the Morgenthaus—Jewish families who live uptown in New York. In describing these families —humorously, but without caricature or ridicule—Mr. Luska shines. The Kochs' house, on Lexington Avenue just above Sixty-first Street, with its gorgeous drawing-room, is an absolutely true picture. He meets Tillie Morgenthau, who is thus described by her mother:

"She works likes a horse. You never saw such a worker. It's simply fearful. And such a *good* girl, Mr. Bacharach. Only nineteen years old, and earns more than a hundred dollars a month, and

supports me and herself. Her uncle, my brother, over there—he's as generous with his money as if it was water; and he gives Tillie a magnificent education. But she's bound to be self-supporting, and hasn't cost him a cent for nearly a year. Of course he gives her elegant presents every once in a while; but she pays our expenses by her own work. She's grand! She's an angel!"

"'You're right there," put in Mr. Koch. 'Tillie's all wool from head to foot.'

"'And a yard vide,' added Mr. Blum."

This charming young lady has been set apart by the rabbi for Elias. She, too, has been educated at the Normal College—"class of '82, salutatory." "I wanted to be valedictory," she says; "I worked hard for it for four years, and when I didn't get it you can't imagine how horribly bad I felt."

The Kochs give a dinner. The younger Koch, Washington I., bursts out in a defence of the Americans. From this Mr. Blum dissents:

"'If you want to argue, you just answer me this: If you think America's such a poor sort of a place, what did you come here for, anyway?'

"'Oh! I came here because I didn't have no money; and I got an idea the streets here was paved with gold.'

"'Well, now that you've got money, and now that you know the streets here an't paved with gold, why don't you go back?'

"'Oh! dot—dot is another question.'

"'Well, I'll tell you why: Because you like it here. Because, down deep, you think it's the finest country in the world. You talk against it for the love of talking. If you went to Europe you'd be as homesick as anybody.'

"'An't my uncle a splendid conversationalist?'

"'Washington,' said his father-in-law solemnly, 'you got a head on you like Daniel Webster's.'

"'O papa!' cried Mrs. Koch, 'you make me die with laifing!'"

The conversation then takes a new turn. Mr. Blum addresses his daughter:

'Sarah, them pickles is simply grand!'

"'O papa!' protested Mrs. Koch, blushing, 'how can you say dot, when Antoinette Morgenthau is seated right next to you? Her pickles beat mine all hollow.'

"'No,' cried Mrs. Morgenthau magnanimously, 'he's right; you're the boss.'

"'Vail,' pursued Mr. Blum judicially, 'there is a defference. Antoinette's pickles is splendid—dot's a faict. May be their flavor is just as good as yours. But yours is crisper. When I put one of your pickles in my mouth, dot makes me feel said. I never taste no pickles so crisp as them since I was a little boy in Chairmany and ate my mamma's. Her pickles—oh! they was loafly, they was maiknificent!'

"'Ach! papa, you got so much zendiment!' his daughter exclaimed with deep sympathy.

"'You ought to taste my mamma's pickles,' Tillie whispered to Elias. 'Of course Mr. Blum is prejudiced in favor of his daughter's.'"

Christine Redwood's talk had been of Rossetti, symphonies; and at almost their first meeting Elias had told her the story of Faust and Marguerite—a subject of conversation which might have seemed rather shocking to old-fashioned people. Nevertheless he marries Miss Tillie Morgenthau, who delights in pickles.

He repents. He leaves her, for no cause whatever. He writes a long rhapsody to the woman he first deserted, and, on hearing of her marriage, dies in an epileptic fit. "Then some children ventured out to play in the Park. Up to the top of this rock they clambered. The next moment, in gleeful excitement, they were calling to their nurse, whom they had left behind in the pathway, 'Come and look at the man asleep!'"

Bunner: "The Midge." "The Story of a New York House."

Mr. Bunner's *Story of a New York House* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons) is the story of a number of old

New York houses. In Mr. Bunner's hands it becomes as beautiful and pathetic as fine art can make it. It, too, reflects the glow of the romance of human life that has been lived on the ways of everyday life. If Mr. Luska and Mr. Bunner continue to write, our young readers of English novels may in time find in New York some of the interest of the London of Dickens and Thackeray. Mr. Bunner's earlier story, *The Midge* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons), is a careful and refined study of the French quarter, whose playground is Washington Square, whose great restaurant was Charlemagne's, whose inhabitants comprise all grades of exiled Frenchmen, from the impoverished vicomte, exiled for cause, to the honest Norman working to buy a small spot in his native land. Mr. Bunner knows this delightful *quartier* well, and he gives us his knowledge of it in the form of a little novel, the heroine of which is an orphan left suddenly in the hands of a lonely, kind-hearted, delicate-minded, and manly old bachelor. Dr. Peters is of the Colonel Newcome type. Nothing could be truer to his generous nature than his attempt to find a religion for the orphan girl cast on his protection. The mother was a Pole—"a Catholic who never went to confession." Dr. Peters is obliged to fulfil the duty of looking after the funeral of this dead woman, who had refused a priest. He goes to the Rev. Theodore Beatty Pratt, in charge of the mission-chapel of the church of St. Gregorius:

"He did not feel quite easy in his mind about getting Pratt to perform the funeral service, although it seemed to be, on the whole, the best thing to do. He had a tender conscience, and it hurt him to think that perhaps, in spite of her petulant cynicism, the dead woman had been a Catholic at heart, and that she might have resented the idea of being laid to rest with alien rites. But then he did not wish to go to Father Dubé. Dubé was worth a dozen of Pratt; but Dubé had his peculiarities. He was a hard-headed, con-

scientious priest, much wearied in spirit and in his two hundred pounds of flesh by the endless needs of his ever-straggling flock, and he drew the line of indulgence at impenitent death. It was enough, he thought, for people to neglect religion and morality and soap and water all their lives; when they came to die the least they could do was to die in the church, and give their poor old pastor a chance to do something for their immortal souls at the one time when they couldn't possibly undo it themselves. This was Father Dubé's idea, although he never formulated it exactly in that way. And so Dr. Peters felt a little delicacy about calling upon him to say Mass for the stranger who had gone out of the world in a distinctly irreligious frame of mind. And (the doctor thought) Pratt would do just as well. It would never occur to Pratt to inquire whether or no the departed sister over whom he was to read the burial service had really been a good Church of England woman. He lived in a state of mild surprise at the fact that there actually were people in this world who did not belong to the Church of England."

The state of mind of the average tolerant American is well expressed in the succeeding paragraph. It is a state of mind which is most difficult to change; it is more stable than the condition of bigotry:

"Dr. Peters' religious views had the haziness of extreme catholicity. In his childhood, when his parents were pillars of the Episcopal Church in their little village in Oneida County, he had been brought up to look upon a Romanist as something nearly as bad as a Jew, in a different way, and not very far removed in guilt from the heathen. Later life and much experience of sore-tried humanity had taught him a lesson of wider charity. He had grown to think better of all creeds and less of any particular one. Now he was Father Dubé's friend, and the friend of the Rev. Theodore Beatty Pratt, and the friend of Brother Strong, of the Bethel; and he liked the Roman Catholic priest best of the three."

Midge, his ward, finds his religious experiments unsatisfactory. She thinks that it is just as easy to read Scriptural texts at home. The doctor appeals to Father Dubé to "make her a Catholic." The priest answers that "it is God who makes Catholics; it is not Dr. Peters or Father Dubé."

The story ends with a marriage. Midge is only slightly sketched, but the doctor and the priest are strongly drawn and the local color is true and fresh. Mr. Bunner's good taste pervades the story. The sentiment is not exaggerated, and the pathos of Midge's position is not overdrawn.

II.

Haggard: "King Solomon's Mines," "Dawn."

Mr. H. Rider Haggard is at present enjoying great popularity. *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* were lurid phantasmagoria, strong in the elements of surprise and wonder. They had new flavor, which the novel-reading public is always demanding. *She*, in spite of the critics, had no resemblance to Moore's fine *Epicurean*, which, with Gerald Griffin's *Invasion*, is too much neglected. *Jess* was an unpleasant story of what is called "contemporaneous human interest," redeemed by some interesting sketches of life among the Boers. *The Witch's Head*, lately issued, is an earlier work of rudimentary merit. *Dawn* is also an early book, but the latest published by Harper & Bros.

Dawn has all the worst qualities of a novel—bad in every sense. It is written in vulgar English. It is too long. It is immoral in its suggestions; and Mr. Haggard lacks even the art of making immorality enticing. This last is the only virtue—one of necessity—that saves *Dawn* from being dangerous.

Tolstoi: "Katia."

Two very popular translations are Tolstoï's *Katia* (New York: Wm. S. Gottsberger) and Jon Thordssön's *Sigfrid*, an Icelandic love-story.

It seems strange to most of us, who have an impression

that Russia is bleak and chill, to notice that Katia revels in lilac-blooms and all the concomitants of spring and summer, and that she is struck by the coldness of the landscapes at Baden-Baden as compared with the more luxuriant scenery of her own country in summer. Katia is a young orphan married to her guardian. There are misunderstandings that come from her inexperience and his peculiar scheme of letting her have her own way and then suffering for it. There are fine analyses of character and motive in *Katia*, and the story is almost idyllic in its purity and simplicity. There is only one passage to be regretted, and that is the description of the declaration of passion made by the marquis. Tolstoï's painting of Russian manners and customs is always perfectly done. Katia thus describes a religious retreat during the octave of the Feast of the Assumption:

"When the horses were ready I entered the droschky, accompanied by Macha or a maid, and drove about three versts to church. In entering the church I never failed to remember that we pray there for all those 'who enter this place in the fear of God,' and I strove to rise to the level of this thought, above all when my feet first touched the two grass-grown steps of the porch. At this hour there were not usually in the church more than ten or a dozen persons, peasants and drorovié, preparing to make their devotions; I returned their salutations with marked humility, and went myself (which I regarded as an act of superior merit) to the drawer where the wax tapers were kept, received a few from the hand of the old soldier who performed the office of starost, and placed them before the images. Through the door of the sanctuary I could see the altar-cloth mamma had embroidered, and above the iconstasé two angels spangled with stars, which I had considered magnificent when I was a little girl, and a dove surrounded by a gilded aureole which, at that same period, often used to absorb my attention."

When the service was over the priest humbly asked the young heiress whether he should go to her house to celebrate Vespers. To which, in order to mortify her

pride, she condescended to say no. In all these pictures of Russian life the abject servility of the Russian priests to rank and wealth is a remarkable feature.

Thorodsson: "Sigfrid."

Jon Thordssön Thoroddsson is an Icelandic poet, and, the translator of *Sigfrid* (New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co.) informs us, next to Bjarne Thorarensson and Jonas Hallgrimsson, the most favored and extensively read. *Sigfrid* is a prose idyl. It bears the stamp of truth. It realizes for us life in eastern Iceland. The ways of the farmers, of the townspeople, whose barons and high nobility are men in small wholesale businesses, the manners of students, are presented to us. We are struck with the low level of civilization and the unconcern with which feminine lapses from purity are regarded. The results of Lutheranism in Sweden, Norway, and Iceland seem to have stifled whatever aspirations the people had.

Mrs. Molesworth; "Marriage."

Mrs. Molesworth is one of the few English "lady novelists" who would be greatly missed. She is safe; she writes good English; she has lived among decent people with so much comfort that she does not find it necessary to run after indecent ones. Her *Marriage and Giving in Marriage* (New York: Harper & Bros.) is a pleasant story of the life of an English girl in France. It is an apology for the French manner of protecting a young girl from the natural sentimentalism of youth.

Aveline, the English girl, is permitted to see Mr. Hereward so often that he and she become interested in each other. At this point her mother, who abhors French restrictions and ideas about marriage, interferes and insists on her marrying a rich and dissipated young Englishman.

Aveline, who wants to be obedient, finds her affections already engaged, when marriage seems impossible. As a rule, English writers insist that the French system of marriages of reason is a cruel one. But, as Mrs. Molesworth shows, how can it be as cruel as the English and American systems, which leave young people together without warning or chaperon until sentiment and inexperience form a compound called love, often followed by a "marriage of unreason?" Aveline talks to Mademoiselle de Villers, who explains the French system:

"'I want to tell you myself — grandmamma said I might, Mademoiselle de Villers began. 'I dare say you can guess what it is, dear Aveline.'

"'You are going to be married,' Aveline exclaimed.

"'Yes—at least that will come in due time. In the first place there will be, of course, *les fiançailles*, but I wanted you to know before it is formally announced. I count you quite like one of my best friends, though I have not known you long. And Monsieur de Bois-Hubert—he likes and admires you so much. I hope we shall always be friends, dear Aveline.'

"'And you,' said Aveline, returning her little caress, for they were in a corner where they could not be seen, 'you are very happy —quite happy, dear Modeste, I hope?'

"'*Quite* happy. Maurice is all I wanted. He is so good and kind, and clever too. And I know he truly cares for me. I can feel it somehow—he is so different from some others I have known. No, I have no misgiving; I feel sure I have done right.'

"'But,' said Aveline in surprise, 'I did not know it was like that here—in France. I thought your parents simply told you whom you were to marry, and that you had to obey them.'

"'My parents gave their consent *first*, of course,' said Modeste. 'They have said on several occasions that this or that gentleman would not be disapproved of by them if I liked him. But then they left me free to decide. I should never have wished to marry any one they *disapproved* of, I hope. *Indeed, I scarcely could have done so. I know that no gentlemen they do not think well of are allowed to become intimate with us. That is only a matter of course.*'

"'I understand,' said Aveline quietly. 'I think in some ways French girls are to be envied, Modeste—and in your case especially.'"

Mrs. Molesworth does not admit that young people should be allowed to marry without consideration of their temporal prospects. In the end Aveline marries Mr. Hereward, but not until he has done away with the chief obstacle to matrimony in his case, and fallen heir to a fortune. Mrs. Molesworth's philosophy is one not generally taught in novels. She teaches that the material conditions of marriage cannot safely be overlooked, and that the thoughtlessness and carelessness of parents are the causes of the great number of unhappy marriages. French parents present no young man to their daughters who is not suitable in every way. The French home is most exclusive, most impenetrable. No stranger not responsibly introduced is admitted. The chaperon is an institution; and the results show that a community of interests is as binding as a community of sentiment. Duty, after all, becomes a habit more likely to last than the first glow of inclination, when "in the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

Marriage and Giving in Marriage might profitably be considered and discussed by American fathers and mothers.

Habberton: "Country Luck."

Mr. John Habberton made one of those successes in the art of fiction which occur only in the summer-time. The careful observer will note that there is a summer novel and a winter novel, and that the summer novel is epidemic. *Helen's Babies* was Mr. Habberton's great hit, and for one summer and some time afterwards it pervaded the social atmosphere. Mr. Habberton has written other novels since. His latest is *Country Luck* (Philadelphia:

J. B. Lippincott & Co.) In reading *Country Luck* one is irresistibly reminded of Mr. Howells—much to the advantage of the latter. Mr. Habberton's work helps to teach us how much better Mr. Howells is than the theories he preaches. Mr. Habberton is the realist whom Mr. Howells holds up as the coming man. None of us can understand how idealistic Mr. Howells is until we read *Country Luck.* By comparison with Phil, Mr. Habberton's country boy, Lemuel Barker, Mr. Howells' country hero, is a romantic creature, surrounded by the idealistic glamour which Mr. Howells pretends to hate.

Mr. Habberton's characters are irredeemably "common," and he does nothing to lift them out of their "commonness." The principals become rich and wear fine clothes, but they do not change. Lucia, for instance, is intended to be what some of the ladies call "'cute." She is sketched in the beginning, when she became a country boarder in the house of the Hayns:

"The one irreconcilable member of the family was the elder daughter, Lucia. She was the oldest child, so she had her own way; she was pretty, so she had always been petted; she was twenty, so she knew everything that she thought worth knowing. She had long before reconstructed the world (in her own mind), just as it should be, from the standpoint that it ought to exist solely for her benefit. Not bad-tempered, on the contrary cheerful and full of high spirits, she was nevertheless in perpetual protest against everything that was not exactly as she would have it, and not all the manners that careful breeding could impart could restrain the unconscious insolence peculiar to young and self-satisfied natures. She would laugh loudly at table at Mrs. Hayn's way of serving an omelet; tell Mrs. Hayn's husband that his Sunday coat looked 'so funny'; express her mind freely, before the whole household, at the horrid way in which the half-grown Hayn boys wore their hair, and do other charming things characteristic of 'careful breeding' in the Tramley family."

Lucia is an uneducated and superficial girl, who does

not even try to speak good English, even if she knows how. She behaves in a snobbish and weak-minded manner when the friend whom she respects in the country comes to the city in rustic clothes. She may be a "type" of a certain class, but she resembles in no way the American gentlewoman, who is not so uncommon as the novelists would have us believe. Mr. Habberton's style is as careless as that of his heroine. But he makes some amends for this by his tenderness and sympathy in treating the old farmer and his wife. The glimpses of "society" he gives us show us a group of vulgar people, who rely principally on their evening suits and dresses for their status. In the country the vulgarity vanishes, and, though the people are hard in outline and the author's description lacks idealism, they are interesting and true to nature. Phil and Lucia marry in the end, of course, after a series of mild episodes in which Phil is broadly grinned at by "luck." Fate is supposed to smile, but "luck," in the story-books, always grins. Mr. Tramley, who is an honest man, makes this true remark about the neglect of American historic localities by Americans:

"A few years ago you and I spent nearly a thousand dollars in visiting some European battle-fields. To-day that old fellow has carefully done the Revolutionary battle-fields of New York and Brooklyn at a total expense of a quarter of a dollar; even then he had a penny left to give a beggar."

Greene: "The Blind Brother."

Mr. Homer Greene's stories of the Pennsylvania coal-mines have what the sated literary æsthete calls "a new flavor." In *The Blind Brother* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.) Mr. Greene sets before his readers a high aim. He does not overdo the pathetic; he tells straightforwardly, in *The Blind Brother*, the story of brotherly

love and simple devotion to truth and honor under the heavy strain of a temptation which comes from that intense brotherly love. An example of Mr. Greene's good taste and avoidance of the death-of-little-Nell business is the passage in which he describes the feelings of the mother of the two boys when it is made plain to her that they are buried in the mine:

'It had been thought a kindness to tell her so at last, and she had thanked them for not keeping the bitter truth from her. She did not ask any more that she might see her two boys in life; she only prayed now that their dead bodies might be brought to her unmangled, to be robed for Christian burial. To this end she began now to make all things ready. She put in order the little best room; she laid out the clean, new clothing and spotless sheets; she even took from her worn purse the four small coins to place upon the white, closed lids. In the locked cupboard, where the boys should not see them until the time came, she found the Christmas presents she had thought to give them that day. Not much, indeed. A few cheap toys, some sweetmeats purchased secretly, a book or two, and, last of all, some little gifts that her own weary, loving hands had wrought in the long hours after the children were asleep. And now the Christmas dawn had come; but the children—"

The children are rescued by no unnatural event—for Mr. Greene is always true to the life of the mines—but through the efforts which miners, straining every energy, make for their brethren whenever an accident occurs. It is a pure, natural, and interesting book.

Ames: "Wishes on Wings."

Marion Howard was a delightful story. Another, after a long interval, by the same author, F. S. D. Ames, ought to be eagerly welcomed. *Wishes on Wings* (New York: Catholic Publication Society Co.) is made up of certain episodes in the life of a selfish and inconsiderate girl, who, however, is capable of some good. The life of the Grain-

gers, a poor and refined English family, is described with a touch worthy of Mrs. Oliphant. We think, however, that the author has made a mistake in introducing the fairy element. Milly could have made her voyage to India and been taught her lesson without the entrance of a fairy on the scene. It is bad art to mix a fairy story with a novellette of real life, and, although the moral is well pointed, it loses some of its effect by the incongruous introduction of the preternatural. Another story in the same volume is "Inside the Gate; or, The Hundredth Sheep." It is more serious in manner and matter than "Wishes on Wings." The hero is a priest who gives up his life for the hundredth sheep. He and his friend, a young seminarian, talk well. This is a suggestive snatch of conversation, caught just as they have passed out of a "severely classical chapel" of the Sacred Heart. Wilfred admits that men may pray in a "miniature heathen temple," but waxes indignant over the bad taste that permits it to be built.

"'Then, I suppose, Trevor,' he says, 'you try to feel no more admiration for Westminster Abbey and the other grand cathedrals that used to be old England's pride and glory than for such a temple as the one we have just left.'"

"'I do not say this, and I am sure you know me well enough to know that I do not mean to imply it. Personally, I, you know, love pillar, arch, and deep religious gloom. I have no sympathy with classical architecture Christianized. But I am only a unit, my dear fellow, and you are only another, and we have a host of brother-units, just as ready to assert themselves, and just as likely to be right. I have often thought of this before, and, do you know, Wilfred, it has often struck me that there is a beautiful answer to it all in the magnificent cry with which David ends, or rather culminates, his psalms, "*Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.*" Yes, every spirit, whether of height or breadth, light or shade, melody or harmony—not to contradict or foil each other, since it was God who, through the instrumentality of man, called each and all into being, but as so

many different means of praise and honor blended into one harmonious whole to the glory of his name."

Though not powerful or remarkable for anything except honesty of purpose and an easy style, F. S. D. Ames' stories are so good that the Catholic public ought to encourage him, or her, to write more of them.

III.

O'Meara: "Narka."

In *Narka*, by Kathleen O'Meara (New York: Harper & Bros.), we are presented to several Nihilists, including the heroine, who does not deserve the name. The hero, Basil, declares that he is in love with Narka, protests to Sœur Marguerite—and this would be an exceedingly improper proceeding, if Sœur Marguerite were not so eminently pious and sensible—that he loves her to distraction, and then coolly marries a Russian princess. As Miss O'Meara hints that this princess has not the most amiable temper in the world, we take leave of Basil with a sense of satisfaction. It is not often that the inconstant hero is served by the novelist with even a hint of poetic justice. The awful contrast between the lives of the rich and the poor occupy the author of *Narka* as well as the author of *The New Antigone*. Both propose the same answer to the outcries and discontent of the poor and to the callousness and selfishness of the rich. It is the answer of Christianity—love and self-sacrifice. But Miss O'Meara puts her answer more satisfactorily. Sœur Marguerite, formerly Mademoiselle de Beaucrillon, is a type of hundreds of women who enter the religious life, thrusting aside luxuries and all those amusements, pleasures, and occupations which the highest civilization offers, to live with the poor, to suffer with them, and to love them in

imitation of their divine Saviour. Miss O'Meara is one of the few modern authors of talent and taste who understand the meaning of the word vocation. She unfolds the character of Sœur Marguerite with such skill that we enjoy it as if we were present at the gradual opening of some lovely blossom. Narka is a noble personage—badly rewarded at the end, however, by being made to be a great *prima donna;* Madame de Beaucrillon is a careful sketch of the Russian aristocrat who would sacrifice her friend to save her brother from a *mésalliance;* Father Christopher and Ivan Gorff are admirably done, but Sœur Marguerite dwarfs them all. She is a new personage in fiction. She is described, too, without cant. She is not once called "the good sister" or "the pious woman"—phrases good in themselves, but sometimes having an unpleasant air of mechanism about them. She has conquered the secret of living. For her, death has veritably no sting. She has left the world, not to cease from loving, but to love more.

"'What a tiring life you lead, Marguerite! Do you never weary of it?'

"'Never for a minute!' the Sister of Charity answers. 'That is the happiness in God's service: it may tire one's body, but it keeps one's heart merry."

"'I wish I could think the poor were grateful to you,' says Narka."

"'Who says they are not grateful?' demands Marguerite. Narka answers: 'It seems to me everybody says it; it is the constant complaint of all the good people who do for the poor that they get no return.' 'What nonsense!' cries Marguerite: 'I wonder what sort of return they would expect? If they gave love, the poor would give them love; but they only give alms, and I don't suppose they expect the poor to give them back alms. It is so silly of people to be always looking for gratitude, and then to go about complaining that they don't get it; the disappointment sours themselves, and the complaining sours other people, for nine people out of ten are ungrateful, and the complaining hits home and hurts their self-love.'"

If Miss O'Meara had deliberately set out to show non-Catholics—who have not yet entirely gotten rid of the idea that every religious leaves the world because of unrequited love—that a true vocation is the happiest, most blessed, most cheerful thing in life, she could not have done it more skillfully than by describing Sœur Marguerite as she has done. Who can help loving this loving sister, who has the cunning of the serpent where the good of souls is involved, and the innocence of the dove? Sœur Marguerite's charity is a very large mantle. She says that when the Pharisees are stripped of their shams even the "poor devils" will laugh. "The poor devils?" some one retorts. "Well, if you are going to stand up for the devils!" "It would be a good thing if we had their zeal and perseverance," answers Marguerite.

Narka, who has a magnificent voice and who is poor, receives an offer from an operatic manager. He thinks he has secured a great vocalist. Narka goes to Marguerite for advice. She expects the little sister to be horrified, but she is not.

"'I expected you would have shrieked at the bare notion of my risking my soul in such a wicked place as the theatre.' 'Is it such a wicked place?' Marguerite asks. 'I don't know. A school friend of mine, a very pious girl, lost her fortune and went on the stage and sang for a year at the *Opéra Comique*, and she remained as pious as ever, and died like a little saint. But that was in Paris; perhaps at Naples it is worse."

Marguerite's love for the terrible people of the *quartier* knows no bounds. They love her and her community in return. She has more than the heroism of a Romola and all the womanliness and wit of a Catherine Seton. Miss O'Meara has added a new character to the gallery of fiction. *The Old House in Picardy* (London: Bentley & Son) is a pleasant novel of French life, also by Miss O'Meara.

IV.

Crawford: "Marzio's Crucifix."

Mr. Marion Crawford's *Marzio's Crucifix* (New York: Macmillan & Co.) is a little masterpiece. Marzio, the carver of wonderfully beautiful things, is a desperate villain—one of those villains so extremely bad that it is possible for a good Christian to hate him with a clear conscience. This is a luxury which one cannot always indulge in, for the modern romancer's villain, like his hero, is generally the victim of circumstances. Marzio is an Italian anarchist of the worst type. Mr. Crawford tells us truly that genius, to produce great works of art, must be religious, and that the marvels of silver-work seen in certain churches of the Old World could not have been produced by any goldsmith who made jewelry for a living. Then he sketches a kind of God-hater whom Americans —thank Heaven!—may yet look for in vain among themselves, but who is not unknown in Continental countries, where the sight of a priest is to him like water to a mad dog:

"Marzio Pandolfi knew all this better than any one"—knew that true art is religious—"and he could no more have separated himself from his passion for making chalices and crucifixes than he could have changed the height of his stature or the color of his eyes. But at the same time he hated the church, the priests, and every one who was to use the beautiful things over which he spent so much time and labor. Had he been indifferent, a careless, good-natured sceptic, he would have been a bad artist. As it was, the very violence of his hatred lent spirit and vigor to his eye and hand. He was willing to work upon the figure, perfecting every detail of expression, until he fancied he could feel and see the silver limbs of the dead Christ suffering upon the cross under the diabolical skill of his long fingers. The monstrous horror of the thought made him work marvels, and the fancied realization of an idea that would startle even a hardened unbeliever lent a feverish impulse to this strange man's genius."

Marzio hates his brother, the priest, Don Paolo, for no other reason than that he is good and a priest. He breaks off the proposed marriage between his pupil, Gianbattista, and his daughter, simply because he thinks that Gianbattista, under Don Paolo's influence, is beginning to believe in God. Don Paolo, in an episode managed with rare reticence and truth, interferes in behalf of the lovers. Marzio resolves to kill him and almost succeeds. Everything comes right in the end—even Marzio, though he certainly does not deserve it. It would perhaps prevent some of our friends from reading *Marzio's Crucifix* if we told how; and it is well worth reading. Mr. Crawford's versatility has not as yet showed that he is weak. The persons in *Marzio's Crucifix* are exquisitely clear-cut and true; and the bits of wit and wisdom scattered through its pages are veritable gems. Mr. Crawford's Cardinal—how delightful it is to find in a novel cardinals and priests in whose company one can feel as safe as if they were in real life!—says that

" 'It would take a long time to build a church if you only employed masons who were in a state of grace.' 'Your brother,' continues the Cardinal, speaking to Don Paolo, 'represents an idea. That idea is the subversion of all social principle. It is an idea which must spread, because there is an enormous number of depraved men in the world who have a very great interest in the destruction of law. The watchword of that party will always be, "There is no God," because God is order, and they desire disorder. They will, it is true, always be a minority, because the greater part of mankind are determined that order shall not be destroyed. But those fellows will fight to the death, because they know that in that battle there will be no quarter for the vanquished. It will be a mighty struggle and will last long, but it will be decisive, and will perhaps never be revived when it is once over. Men will kill each other wherever they meet, during months and years, before the end comes; for all men who say that there is a God in heaven will be upon one side, and all those who say there is no God will be upon the other."

It is remarkable that in *The New Antigone*, in *Narka*, in *Marzio's Crucifix* the church is recognized as the only stronghold of faith against the rising of unbelief.

Stockton: "Hundredth Man."

Mr. Frank Stockton's *Hundredth Man* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons) is unequal. The passages that treat of life in a New York restaurant are full of the quaint realism, the art of which Mr. Stockton alone possesses; but other parts of the story are not so interesting. They have an air of being incongruous padding.

Howells: "April Hopes."

April Hopes, by W. D. Howells (New York: Harper & Bros.), is a story of American life. It was once said of Anthony Trollope that so long as common-place people continued to be born he would be well supplied with characters. The same thing may be said of Mr. Howells, whose practice, however, is much better than his theories. If his people talk as people do talk in every-day life—platitudes and trivialities in doubtful English—it is the worst that can be said of them. They are innocent-minded and innocent-tongued people. Suppose he should follow up his expressed admiration of the Russian novelists by giving us pictures of the evil that works around us! Let us not find fault with the silly young collegian and the clever young Ritualistic girl in *April Hopes*. They are true to nature, so far as they go. Whether they are worth the pages they get is a question. At any rate, Mr. Howells has the art of making stupid people so interesting that one follows them, although grumbling at the exertion.

Frederic: "Seth's Brother's Wife."

Seth's Brother's Wife, by Harold Frederic (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), and *Her Two Millions*, by William Westall (Harper & Bros.), are novels which serve to show that a journalist has a hard time in this world to keep his place in his profession without surrendering his principles. Seth manages to do it; Balmaine does it, too —but accepts the probability of starvation in order to do it. The early chapters of *Seth's Brother's Wife* are delightful. Seth, newly come into a newspaper office, trembles before the tasks set him—those of compiling "Society Jottings" and "Art, Music, and the Drama."

"'Well, at any rate,' said an editor, 'you can do "Agricultural"; you must know that right down to the ground.' Seth assents and declares that the stuff the papers print for farmers is pure rubbish. 'I suppose it is,' assents Mr. Tyler. 'I know that Dent—he is a New York City boy, who doesn't know clover from cabbage—once put in a paragraph about the importance of feeding chickens on rock-salt, and an old farmer from Baltus came in early one morning and whaled the bookkeeper out of his boots because he had followed the advice and killed all his hens. There must be some funny man out West somewhere who makes up these bad agricultural paragraphs, and of course they get copied. How can fellows like Dent, for instance, tell which are good and which not? Then there's "Religious." 'You can do that easily enough.' 'Yes,' interposed Murtagh, 'all you have to do is to lay for the Obogo *Evening Mercury*. Every Saturday that has a column of "Religious." Alec Watson, a fellow in that office, has fifty-two of these columns, extracts from Thomas à Kempis, and Wesley, and Spurgeon, and that sort of thing, which have been running in the *Mercury* since before the war. When New Year's comes he starts 'em going again, round and round. Nobody knows the difference.' . . . 'Then there ought to be some originality about it, too,' said Tom Watts. 'It is just as well to sling in some items of your own, I think, such as "There is a growing desire among the Baptists to have Bishops, like other people," or, "It is understood that at the coming consistory the Pope will create seven new American cardinals." That last is a particularly

good point. Every once in a while predict more cardinals. It doesn't hurt anybody and it makes you solid when the thing does happen. There's nothing like original news to show the influence of journalism. One morning, after the cakes had been bad for a week, heavy, sour, or something else, I said to my landlady that the fault must be in the buckwheat. She said no, she didn't think so, for the flour looked very nice indeed. I put a line in "Local Glimpses" that day, saying that unfortunately the buckwheat this year was of inferior quality, and the very next morning she apologized to me: said I was right; the buckwheat *was* bad; she had read it so in the *Chronicle*. Can you imagine a nobler example of the power of the press?'"

Seth, like all the heroes, dangles between a very nice girl and his brother's wife, who is a bad woman, not well described. He finally chooses the nice girl. Mr. Frederic's narrative is good and his perception of the dramatic quick. The scene between Seth and his brother's wife, when she thinks that he has murdered his brother for her sake, has terrible elements in it; but somehow it is not terrible. The book is good until Seth begins to make love to his brother's wife. If Mr. Frederic could cut out half his novel and add matter half as good as the first part, his work would justify the great expectations based on his previous reputation.

Westall: "Her Two Millions."

Mr. Westall's *Her Two Millions* is an improvement on his other story, *A Fair Crusader*. Its moral is a good one —that no journal can be honest and independent which must trim and sway according to the interests of its business department. The change in opinion among novelists on Italian affairs is indicated by the villain of the book being a Garibaldian. If novels are what comedy used to be, a mirror of contemporary opinion, Conservatism will shortly be the fashion and Religion replace the

pretentious Agnosticism so recently considered a very proper state of mind.

V.

Anon.: "Constance of Arcadia."

An historical romance which is neither historical nor romantic is a sad example of bad judgment. Sometimes people are inclined to forgive the doubtfulness of the history in romances—as they do in Sir Walter Scott's—if there be interest, brilliant color, and dramatic movement; but when the history is doubtful, and the doubtfulness of it does not flavor the story with pungent spice, a romance of that kind has no reason to give for its existence. *Constance of Arcadia* (Boston: Roberts Brothers) has a good name. It calls up associations at once picturesque and tender. It is suggestive of romance and of times in which an author could find dramatic contrast and gorgeous color. It is anonymous, too, which is in its favor. And yet the author has contrived to make a very dull narrative, full of absurdities about the Jesuits, written with a very solemn air. It is not necessary to warn anybody against them, for the character of Constance is too uninteresting to excite interest. Her mother-in-law, Henrietta de la Tour, is another puppet, and Charles and Claude de la Tour are, like Charnacé, only names without anything but the author's assurance that they ate, drank, talked, and thought, to justify their place among human beings.

Constance de la Tour is the wife of Charles, who was lieutenant-governor of Arcadia when Arcadia was liable to be seized at any moment by Charles I. of England or Louis XIII. Constance is a Huguenot from La Rochelle. She loved in France the Sieur Charnacé, but Charnacé was a Catholic and she refused to marry him. She took

Charles de la Tour, a canny Frenchman, who was making a fortune in Arcadia in the fur trade. De la Tour was strictly a man of business, an Arcadian Vicar of Bray. And Constance begins to ask herself whether she would not have done better to have married the "Papistical" Charnacé, when the latter appears in Arcadia. Charnacé has been sent out by the superior of the Jesuits. He is, it seems, a Jesuit of the "short robe." So soon as he hears that Constance is alive—he fancied that she had died during the siege of La Rochelle—he, in his cheerful "Jesuitical" way, thinks on means for destroying Constance's husband.

"He would not," writes the author, "be too scrupulous. It was surely an accusation of the enemies of the holy church, emanating from the great adversary, that he himself" (Charnacé, not the devil), "in obeying his superior, was willing to do evil that good might come. Is not all evil in the motive? The motive is good—the greater glory of God. Does not this holy end make holy the means needful to reach that end? The life, or at least the liberty, or at least the carnal prosperity of La Tour must be sacrificed—for the good of the church, the state, the holy Hundred Associates who were to plant Catholic colonies, and also for the spiritual good of La Tour himself."

Charnacé, having convinced himself in this manner that it is his duty to ruin Constance's husband, goes to "his priest, Fra Cupàvo, and receives the sacrament." This confessor is a Jesuit, too, but, according to the author of *Constance*, he is also a friar. Later Charnacé, in spite of his piety, shoots off the lobes of his confessor's ears, who looks on the sieur as his "master." This condition of affairs has evidently been evolved from the inner consciousness of the author. Charnacé longs earnestly to dispose of De la Tour, that Constance might perhaps, under his influence, become the founder of a house of religious. Both Charnacé and Constance die—Charnacé

very suddenly—without having spoken the affection they feel. After this the singular Jesuits, who call one another "Fra," begin to conspire to get Charnacé's fortune, which he has left to Constance's son, who is to be in charge of a Huguenot guardian. The Jesuit "friars" arrange that a very charming widow shall declare that she is Charnacé's wife; and on the head of this are written these exceedingly silly sentences:

"Jean Cupàvo [Charnacé's confessor] did not, however, in his mourning altogether lose his wits. 'What is to become of the governor's property?' asked the priest. 'Is our mission of St. Ignatius to exist only on paper?' To be sure his excellency left no will or wife, but with the church all things are possible. Was it possible, also, that the church would avenge the father confessor for the loss of the lobes of his ears, which he had borne without a wrinkle or apparent disturbance of temper? Silent grudges have often borne an important part in the great crises of history. Why not in Arcadia?"

De la Tour, for reasons of a pecuniary nature, finally marries the widow, who

"Accordingly, at the suggestion of her confessor, mingled in her husband's cup of the wedding-wine powder of relics of *Saint* Brébœuf, the Jesuit father who suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Iroquois. And, after that, neither she nor the friars had reason to suspect Governor La Tour of heresy!"

It is a pity that the author of *Constance of Arcadia* should have written such a book. His enemies have reason to rejoice.

Stevenson: "Kidnapped."

Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson has taken advantage of the popularity he has acquired, by writing book after book in rapid succession, each better than the other. His *Kidnapped* (Cassell & Co., limited) is a De-Foe-like narrative of the adventures of a Scotch youth, David Balfour, who

was kidnapped and cast away, who suffered on a desert isle, lived among Jacobites in the Highlands, and who begins another series of adventures at the end of the book. The characteristics of this story are manliness and an exact comprehension of the Highland character. The dialogue between David Balfour, a Presbyterian, and Alan Stewart, whose conceptions of Christianity may be described as "Highland," shows a keen perception of the motives of that strange people, whose fidelity and bravery are proverbial:

"Troth and indeed!" said Alan, speaking of a hated Campbell, "they will do him no harm; the more's the pity. And barring that about Christianity"—David had reproved him for the "un-Christianity of blowing off so many words in anger"—"barring that about Christianity (of which my opinion is quite otherwise, or I would be nae Christian), I am much of your mind."

"Opinion here or opinion there," said David, "it's a kent thing that Christianity forbids revenge."

"Ay, it's well seen it was a Campbell taught ye! It would be a convenient thing for them and their sort if there was no such a thing as a lad and a gun behind a heather bush."

The Highlands were in process of conversion, however, by various catechists sent from Edinburgh, some also appointed by local dignitaries. One of these was accused of highway robberies. And of him another catechist says:

"It was MacLean of Duart gave it to him because he was blind. 'But perhaps it was a peety,' says my host; 'for he is always on the road, going from one place to another to hear the young folk say their catechism, and doubtless that is a great temptation to the poor man.'

"We had no sooner come to the door of Mr. Henderson's dwelling than, to my great surprise (for I was now used to the politeness of the Highlanders), he (another catechist) burst rudely past me, dashed into the room, caught up a jar and a small horn spoon, and began ladling snuff into his nose in ...ost excessive quantities. Then

he had a hearty fit of sneezing, and looked around upon me with rather a silly smile.

"'It's a vow I took," says he. 'I took a vow upon me that I would nae carry it. Doubtless it's a great privation; but when I think upon the martyrs, not only to the Scottish Covenant but to other points of Christianity, I think shame to mind it.'"

Kidnapped is a novel without a love-story running through it, and it is the more to be commended for that. The old Germans held that there was a great deal to be done in life by their young men before they should "turn to thoughts of love," and David Balfour is an exemplification of this opinion, for which modern society would be better and more manly.

Hamlin: "A Politician's Daughter."

An American political novel does not entice the cautious reader of light literature. One knows rather well what to expect by this time. The caucus, the convention; the point-lace candidate admitting plebian voters into his house; the agonies of his wife when the "heeler" expectorates on her carpet and brushes against her *bric-a-brac;* Saratoga, high white hats, big gold chains, and German and Irish slang borrowed from the newspaper reporters—all this we have had, and this is considered to be an epitome of American political life. Mrs. Myra Sawyer Hamlin, in *A Politician's Daughter* (D. Appleton & Co.), has introduced us to new scenes. She takes us to a Massachusetts country town. A Boston snob—of the kind fortunately growing less common—who fancies that the fact that his great-grandfather worked hard to live around Plymouth Rock gives him a patent of nobility, walks home with Miss Harcourt, the politician's daughter, from church. His name is Arthur Bradley, and he carries a tightly-rolled umbrella after the English fashion:

"The avenue to Elmholm was a long, winding walk, quite an eighth of a mile in extent; but, arrived at the great iron gate, solidly guarded by two lions, young Bradley paused, charged with his umbrella the turf at his feet, and began rather awkwardly: 'You know —you see—you will understand, my dear Miss Harcourt, how impossible—how utterly impossible—it is for me to go further. My party principles, my personal feelings, my family and education are so opposed to your father's political attitude that I should compromise my dignity by even entering the gates. It must have seemed very strange to you that I have so repeatedly excused myself from accepting your invitations, especially as I have been unable to conceal from you or myself the unbounded admiration I have for you. You are the only attraction which holds me in Terratine. Coming here transiently on business, I have been held here week after week in the hope of a casual meeting with you, and I have been rewarded here and there, as you know—first by Mrs. Allen in allowing me to take you out to dinner, and then by other kind people who have given me impersonal social opportunities. And here, at the end of six weeks, I cannot go and I have no right to stay. You know what my family is—"

It is understood that the sentiments expressed in this speech, which is suddenly cut short by Miss Harcourt, are quite proper to a Bostonian whose ancestors have grown in grandeur, like Becky Sharp's, because their descendant has concentrated his mind on them, and for no other reason. They seem to mean insufferable conceit to the outside Englishman or American who is not a Bostonian. But we all have our weaknesses. The Philadelphia matron who would die rather than visit persons that live west of Broad Street and north of Market; the Baltimorean who positively cannot bow to vulgar people without a pedigree from the Cecils; the New York maiden who must drop all acquaintances who cannot afford to join the proper dancing classes—all smile at the pretensions of the Bostonian. Probably there was caste in early Rome when the third generation of the somewhat dubious and tarnished gentlemen who founded that an-

cient colony refused to know anybody not descended from the Sabine women.

Miss Harcourt has no amiable tolerance for the Bostonian's belief in his family. She sacrilegiously declares that she does not entirely understand what his family is. He answers that "they have been cultured gentlemen; they have been educated men; they have never been in politics." Then Miss Harcourt makes a speech that, if delivered on the stage, would "bring down" the gallery. She asks if the gentlemen of '76 had kept out of politics, what would have become of the republic?

Miss Harcourt bears herself in a spirited manner throughout the novel, rejects a typical politician's son, and marries Bradley. After this she was, we presume, translated alive to the heights where the Boston Brahmins sit on high and meditate on their great merits. *A Politician's Daughter* is a clever story, sketched rather than filled out. There are some good satirical hits, and some speeches worth remembering. The style is interesting but careless; it is evidently the work of a woman of refinement, whose observation of life is quick but not far-reaching.

George Manville Fenn's *Double Cunning* (Appleton & Co.) is a sensational novel, nothing more. *Katherine Blythe*, by Katharine Lee, is a harmless and flavorless story of the kind that English writers turn out by the hundred every year.

Valera: "Pepita Ximinez."

Señor Juan Valera is one of the modern Spanish novelists who, from a literary point of view, deserves recognition from the world. He knows and loves Spain; he has a delightful style, crisp and with a sub-acid, humorous flavor; and he knows how to tell a story. *Pepita Ximinez*

(Appleton & Co.), translated into English, is the best known of his works. Señor Valera has written a long explanatory preface to the American edition of this work, in which he explains how it came to exist. He knows what life in the United States is, for he was till recently Spanish minister at Washington. Señor Valera's preface is like a heavy stone tied to the tail of a light and ascending kite. It is too heavy for it, and the kite would fly through the air all the more gracefully without it. The preface contains some wise sentences, more absurd ones, and several replete with that delicious Spanish humor with which *Pepita Ximinez* is seasoned, and which is obscured, but rendered nevertheless, as well as is possible, in the English translation.

It seems strange that Señor Valera had thought it necessary to study the religious mystical literature of Spain in order to create a pastoral like *Pepita Ximinez*. It would be a very charming book if it were not for an episode which will prevent it from having a place in the family library—an episode which was not needed and which spoils a story as *naïve* and reflective of the Andalusian life as any of Fernan Caballero's, and with a higher literary finish. Señor Valera pretends in his preface that he intended to do a number of high-sounding things in writing *Pepita Ximinez*. He has, after all, taken a young theological student, fervent, pure, docile, but without a religious vocation, and showed how, during a vacation at home, he fell in love with the young widow, Pepita, and married her. A Catholic reading the story feels that Señor Valera knows his hero and his hero's surroundings. Being a Catholic himself, though, he confesses, not a very devout one, Señor Valera does not shock our sensibilities by any of those exasperating misrepresentations that make absurd books touching on the life of Catholics and writ-

ten by non-Catholics. It is a pity that Señor Valera did not leave out one objectionable scene and keep his preface for his biography. We cannot recommend *Pepita Ximinez* because of that one scene in which the student succumbs to temptation. It spoils a fresh and true pastoral comedy. The old dean is an excellent specimen of the Spanish priesthood, and the student himself is a witness for the inspiring power of the Catholic Church and the wisdom of her discipline. Señor Valera very superfluously supplies *his* lesson in a high-flown paragraph:

"What is certain is that, if it be allowable to draw any conclusion from a story, the inference that may be deduced from mine is, that faith in an all-seeing and personal God, and in the love of this God, who is present in the depths of the soul, even when we refuse to follow the higher vocation to which he would persuade and solicit us—even were we carried away by the violence of mundane passions to commit, like Don Luis, almost all the capital sins in a single day—elevates the soul, purifies the other emotions, sustains human dignity, and lends poetry, nobility, and holiness to the commonest state, condition, and manner of life.'"

The absence of that cynicism—to be expected from a man of the modern school of literature—which would deny the dignity and solemnity of the priestly vocation is a consolatory characteristic of Señor Valera's work. The letter of the old dean, Don Luis' preceptor, in which he says that a theological student of "more poetry than piety" had better not become a priest, is worthy of Cervantes.

VI.

Woolson: "George Eliot and her Heroines."

A very refreshing and honestly written book is Mrs. Abba Goold Woolson's *George Eliot and her Heroines*. It is refreshing because it comes at a time when the worship

of George Eliot is reaching a point at which it becomes a "craze." People are beginning to put Mrs. Cross on a pedestal higher than Shakespeare's, and an unreasoning crowd acclaim as supreme an author who had great merit as a keen observer of human life around her, but whose gloomy, barren, and, we cannot help suspecting, affected philosophy distorted much that ought to have been beautiful into failure.

It would be silly to pretend that George Eliot was not a great literary artist because her opinions, her objectless altruism, her determination to show that most marriages are disastrous, and her ponderous self-consciousness interfere with the value of her work. But we rejoice that a clear-thinking writer, basing her conclusions on Christian teaching, has pointed out the flaws that exist in the composition of a literary idol whose worship, unstinted and unreflecting, must have an ill effect on minds and morals. Mrs. Woolson sums up the tenets of the creed which Mrs. Cross taught, more or less veiled, in all her writings:

"Perhaps the fundamental principles of her belief cannot be more clearly and briefly indicated than by giving the words of a personal friend, in his report of her conversation: *

"'Taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet-calls of men—the words *God*, *Immortality*, *Duty*—she pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing law.'

"Or, in our own words, there was, according to her creed, no supreme Creator, demanding right conduct from his creatures, and himself furnishing the instinctive sense to determine what right conduct is; no life beyond this, to supplement our existence here, to

* F. W. H. Meyers, in the *Century Magazine*, November, 1881.

atone for its suffering and to recompense its steadfast adherence to duty; no comprehension of duty, except as a generous impulse we may chance to feel to extend aid and comfort to fellow-creatures as hopeless as ourselves — creatures who have no home in any other world, and, like the butterflies, are fashioned but for a day, and that a day, not of warmth and bloom and fragrance, but oftener of searching blasts, sullen skies, and frozen fields."

Of the heroines of George Eliot, Mrs. Woolson truly says:

"They do not die; they do not plunge wildly into sin, suffer stout martyrdom, or surrender proudly to fate. They simply live and live on. What was a leaping flame becomes a lingering smudge. There are no graves for us to weep over, no consoling visions of a translation to the stars."

Dorothea, admirably depicted by the touch of genius, fails miserably; Romola floats away into self-sacrifice that seems to hold no compensation for her; Maggie, in the *Mill on the Floss*, owing to a crooked view of morality, suffers horribly; Gwendolen becomes a wreck; Savonarola, a shadow in her hands, fails miserably; Tito, the most masterly of her characters, falls little by little; Grandcourt, Lydgate—all pass before us disconsolate, unsatisfied, unconsoled.

Mrs. Woolson's critique is thoroughly comprehensive and very sound in both an ethical and literary sense. It is a distinction, and a valuable one for her, that she has not let herself be carried away from her honest conclusions regarding George Eliot and her works by the uncritical estimate which a great part of those who form public opinion have made of the works of a woman of genius who deserves a place as a novelist beside Mrs. Gaskell and Miss Austen rather than near Thackeray or Balzac, and as a philosopher to be ranked among those that tried to pull down while the Light that enlighteneth the world shone full upon them. Fortunately, genera-

tions to come will "skip" her theories, as they have forgotten the purpose of *Gulliver*, and read her novels for the stories which, once read, can never be recalled without admiration and wonder at such potency and vividness of imagination and expression.

Ludlow: "The Captain of the Janizaries."

The historical novel is coming into vogue again, and the Rev. James Ludlow is in the fashion in giving the public *The Captain of the Janizaries: A Tale of the Fall of Constantinople* (New York: Dodd & Mead). Mr. Ludlow chooses as his hero George Castriot, better known in history as Scanderbeg. Mgr. Seton, in *Roman Essays*, gives an exhaustive account of this Albanian prince, who helped to save Europe from Moslem encroachments at a critical time. Mr. Ludlow has a fine opportunity; he has selected his epoch with discernment, for Sir Walter Scott could not have seized a more stirring time or a more picturesque figure. George Castriot was forced to embrace Mohammedanism when young, having been given to the sultan as a hostage. He became the first military man in the dominions of Amurath, but gave up all his honors to fight for the cross against the crescent, which threatened soon to hang over Christian Europe as a full moon. He turned back the tide, and he might have led a new crusade and recovered Constantinople had monarchs listened to the voice of the pope. Mr. Ludlow's romance starts out well, but he fails to interest us in Scanderbeg or the Christians. We are shown that the Christians, especially the Latins, were little better than the Moslems. He paints Cardinal Julian as an ecclesiastical fop, and asserts that he gave the Christians, when making a breach of faith, "absolution" for what they were about to do. The life of the Janizaries is well described. There are

chapters in which the action of the story is rapid and its scenes graphic. But these good qualities cannot atone for the uncertain grasp the author seems to have on the great religious crisis which Scanderbeg so well understood, and which made the battle of Lepanto a glorious episode, not only in the annals of the world, but in those of the church. It is curious that non-Catholic writers seem usually to sympathize with any form of revolt against the church, and to give the impression that Christianity did not exist before Luther made the protest he afterwards remorsefully regretted

"Life of a Prig."

The Life of a Prig, by One, reprinted by Henry Holt & Co. (New York) from the second English edition, is a neat bit of satire. It is apparently a very gay trifle, but, nevertheless, it has a keen point. It is an arrow that pierces none the less deeply because it is feathered with a tinted plume. The prig is a type of the self-conceited, self-confident, self-sufficient "seeker after truth" more common in England than anywhere else. The prig pretends that he wants to find the truth, when he really only wants to gratify his vanity by an assumption of being of the aristocracy of letters. He is an Oxford man afflicted with an ambition to be "higher" than any of his brother-Anglicans.

"I happened to meet a Roman Catholic lady," writes the prig, when he had gotten so 'high' that his head was thumping against the roof of the Anglican structure, "whom I had known for many years. To her I confided the possibility of my considering the claims of the Church of Rome. Instead of expressing unbounded joy at the prospect of the conversion of a man of my attainments, to my utter astonishment she urged me to 'pray for light.' *I* pray for light! And she to recommend me to do so! Why, this woman's theological training would have been a mere grain of sand to the shores of the

Atlantic in comparison with mine. The temptation to point out the darkness of her own ignorance was well-nigh irresistible, and her impertinence was unbearable; but while I was still staggering with amazement she added that *she* would pray for me. This fairly took my breath away, and I fled from the scene. Verily, the assurance of some people is astounding! A friend had once recommended me to endeavor to see a little behind the scenes before I made up my mind to join the Church of Rome, and I now felt that there was some force in his advice; for if a Roman Catholic of nomental culture could be so impertinent as to suggest to an Oxford man who had taken high honors that he should pray for light, there must be something wrong about Romanism."

The prig progresses towards Agnosticism and narrates his experiences with delightful simplicity. He goes through Brahminism, Buddhism, and depicts Confucius with the same feeling of superiority. He is constantly confounded, but he does not know it. His meeting with an Agnostic boy who practises what the prig only theorizes on is a shock to the prig, but he recovers from it with his usual elasticity:

"When I joined my pupil in the school-room he said: 'I am anxious for your opinion on the plurality of wives. The modern law of marriage is, of course, a mere matter of accident and convenience. It seems to me that the deeply religious man should propagate the truth by marrying a thousand wives and bringing up his children to believe in nothing.

This logical young Agnostic goes on to say on the propriety of marriage:

"My father, for instance, ought not to have married. He is gouty, there is lunacy in his family, and his temper is uncertain. I ought never to marry for the same reason, and furthermore, because I am delicate. Indeed, I doubt whether I am fit to survive; and if my frame does not develop itself in three or four years I think it will be my duty to destroy myself."

The Life of a Prig is a clever booklet. The manner of the satire is most refined and in perfectly good taste.

Henderson: "The Prelate."

The Prelate: A Novel, by Isaac Henderson (Boston: Ticknor & Co.), is the story of a certain Mgr. Altieri, who feels that the people of Italy are thirsting for a "pure and patriotic religion which they can make part of their daily lives." He leaves the church and proceeds to establish this national religion in sympathy with the national welfare. The Jesuits become alarmed and form a horrible plot against him—so horrible that the author of this book cannot make out what it is. A young Jesuit, who calls himself "Giuseppe," and who is less hardened than his brethren, kneels near a beautiful American, Helen Rathborne, in St. Peter's during a "*festa*." The music is powerful, and under cover of its rolling tone the tender-hearted Giuseppe reveals the existence of the Jesuit plot to Miss Rathborne, who assists at church services armed with "a translation of a Roman Catholic mission." This episode was probably suggested by one said to have occurred in the Music Hall at Boston while the great organ was thundering. A housekeeper, determined not to let music inconvenience her, took advantage of a fugue to give some information to a friend, and when the sound abruptly ceased she was heard stridently saying, "We fry ours in oil." A knowledge of the origin of the source of chapter xii. in *The Prelate* adds greatly to the interest of it. Suppose Giuseppe should be caught in a similar manner and be heard yelling his mysterious words in St. Peter's! What would the Inquisition do?

"Presently," writes Mr. Isaac Henderson, "Helen started as she realized that something had been slipped into the hand which rested upon her parasol. Looking down quickly, she saw only the kneeling priest, whose lips moved as though he were praying, and whose manner betrayed no knowledge of the strange circumstance. As her eyes rested an instant upon his face he muttered distinctly, without seem-

ing to see her, the word 'Read,' and was instantly absorbed again in prayer. Her first impulse was to open her hand and let the paper fall, but the thought flashed across her mind that possibly the young priest was in trouble, and, desiring to communicate with the outer world, had chosen this opportunity and method. In any case, she reasoned, it could do no harm to examine the paper."

Miss Rathborne saw the words, "A friend is in danger —kneel!" "Without further hesitation she began to sink to her knees. Mrs. Wrexel noticed the movement, and, stiff little Protestant that she was, her surprise and horror were so evident that Helen intuitively straightened herself again." But curiosity got the better of her scruples. She heard the young priest whisper, "Tell Altieri," and then, "*Guarda!*" in "his native tongue." "How did you learn it?" she whispered. "It was some time before he replied, but presently the peals of the organ burst forth, and he said, 'I overheard it, by God's will!'"

After a while "the congregation broke out into a general response. 'You must tell me your name,' she whispered. 'I dare not; *I had better die.*' When the next general response was made she said, distinctly, 'Then I'll not take the risk either.'" Finally the young priest whispered, "Giuseppe."

Miss Rathborne visited the monsignore—or, rather, the late monsignore—to warn him. She was seen to enter his apartments by several ladies. She talked with this fascinating "Old Catholic," founder of the Italian patriotic church, for two hours.

Her troubles begin. The Americans and English in Rome "cut" her. She is taken up by an Italian princess who is no better than she should be. She will not reveal the reason that made her visit "the prelate." She has promised not to do it, and the young priest, who fears the vengeance of the Jesuits, insists that she shall lose her

reputation rather than tell what the music in St. Peter's had concealed so much more effectively than the fugue in the Boston Music Hall. On this absurd thread of plot *The Prelate* hangs. "Monsignore" Altieri is, of course, about to marry the heroic young American girl when he is fortunately drowned during a very weak storm.

Elliott: "The Felmeres."

The Felmeres, by S. B. Elliott (New York: D. Appleton & Co.), is a novel with an Agnostic heroine. It is a powerful story, but not a healthy one. It leaves an impression of hopelessness which is unrelieved by the only consolation offered by the author:

> "Behold, we know not anything:
> I can but trust that good shall fall
> At last—far off—at last to all,
> And every winter change to spring."

Helen Felmere has been brought up in a lonely country place by an infidel father. Near their house is a Catholic church, served by Father Paul, whom Mr. Felmere dislikes intensely. Helen's mother left the place years before, and her husband thus speaks of her:

> "'She never loved me—never!' he cried. 'She married me at the instigation of her priest for the benefit of their church; she left me at the instigation of her priest because I was an obstinate heretic, and unexpectedly a poor one! And she took with her my son—my only son!—blasting and desolating my life because she was a Christian! And in this countryside she is almost canonized because she broke her vows to her God, leaving home, and husband, and what she thought was a dying child, in obedience to her priest and conscience! She is sainted; we are condemned, cast out!'"

This is a false note. It jars all through the book. The author accepts this version of the motives which led a Catholic to become the wife of an infidel as true. In the mouth of an angry man it might not be out of place. But

in a book in which the struggles of faith and un-faith are depicted, it is unfair to weigh down with assumed wrong the strongest power against infidelity. The reader is at once given to understand that a church which advises a mixed marriage for the sake of temporal gain, and then obliges a wife to desert her husband because the gain proves less than it was supposed to be, is practically worse than Agnosticism. The author of *The Felmeres* might have made a noble book had he taken the trouble to find out the real doctrine of the church on mixed marriages, or had he not been so eager to put the Catholic Church in the wrong. No hint is given that Mr. Felmere made the usual promises when he married his Catholic wife. He probably did, as he was dealing with such a zealous priest as "Father Paul." In that case it was he who broke his pledge by insisting on his children remaining unbaptized. However, the Catholic Church in the very beginning of the book is branded with dishonesty. Later in the story Helen meets the Rev. Mr. Heath, the best exemplar of Christianity in the book. He turns out to be her brother:

"'You were not educated an unbeliever?' she asked.

"'No! I was brought up a Romanist.'

"'How, then, are you an Anglican?'

"'The Romish Church, or rather a mistaken priest, made my mother commit a great wrong!' he answered slowly, 'and I could no longer tolerate or trust its teachings. It was a bitter trial to forsake the religion of my mother, but truth compelled me to.'"

It is not strange that Helen clings to her father's memory: he, at least, was consistent; but the Christians around her only held one doctrine in common—hatred of Rome. She has married a man whom she does not love, and has met a man whom she does love. She is frank and plain-spoken to a degree that excites sympathy for the husband,

whose worst fault was in marrying her. She does not pretend to disguise her preference, although she remains pure in thought and deed. She has the pagan virtues, but not the Christian ones. A time comes when she must let her little child be baptized or flee with him. With a self-abnegation in contrast to the "weakness" of her "Romanist" mother, she resolves to give the child up to the Christians. He is about to be taken away from her, with her consent, when she falls under the carriage-wheels in a last effort to grasp her child, and dies defying God.

The sympathy of the reader is directed, so far as the author of *The Felmeres* can direct it, towards the heroine; and Helen, compared with the Christians around her, is a person worthy of respect. The Christians have very little to say for their creed, and even Felix Gordon, the hero of the novel, is almost led to doubt by the young nationalist. He has few arguments against hers. Felix declares that "the Romish Church claims the authority to annul any oath or loose any tie, however sacred"—implying that the church can break the marriage-bond after it has been once joined. Helen evidently had some excuse for clinging to her rationalism when the only church that could give her consolation was so continually misrepresented. Rev. Heber Newton attacks Christianity and calls it "Romanism." Protestants are constantly cutting the ground from under their own feet in their arguments with rationalists by doing the same thing. Helen Felmere will not believe in God, principally because she fears that there is a hereafter, in which her father will accuse her of having deserted him. None of the Christians in the novel have acumen enough to point out her illogical state of mind to her. Octave Feuillet, in *La Morte*, treats rationalism as applied to the education of young girls; but his subject—a girl brought up by an infidel father—

steeps herself in crime, as Christianity does not control her thoughts or restrain her passions. The heroine of *The Felmeres*, on the contrary, does no wrong; she suffers wrong; she resists temptation; she is truthful and pure without any strong motives for being so. She dislikes her husband; her home has been made unhappy by a meddling mother-in-law; but she stands firm to her duty, and, in the eyes of the author, makes a sublime sacrifice of which her mother was incapable. She denies the existence of God for fear that there is a God who has an eternity. The girl in *The Bostonians*, who is a mirror of purity, but who prefers free love to marriage, is really a less inconsistent creature. The author of *The Felmeres* can write well and strongly; the pathos of the book is at times heart-touching; but his study of the problem he touches and of the characters he sketches has not reached the inner life. Octave Feuillet makes his infidel woman a fiend; S. B. Elliott makes her a martyr; whereas in real life there lately died one who in her theories soared to a Positivist heaven, but in her life sank, weighed down by these beautiful theories, to the commission of public sin. This was George Eliot.

VII.

Dahlgren: "The Lost Name."

It is safe to expect that the heroine of every eight English novels out of ten will be a married woman in love with some paragon of the opposite sex. The afflicted fair who marries the wrong man is a favorite with the "lady novelist." And an essay on the pruriency of the "lady novelist's" manner of putting her heroines into suggestive situations might be made as trenchant as Louis Veuillot's famous attack on the *femmes-auteurs* of his time. A batch

of these have gone into the waste-basket. *The Lost Name*, by Madeline Vinton Dahlgren (Boston: Ticknor & Co.), is not among them. It is the story of a young American whose ancestor back in the reign of the French king Louis XV. dropped his name. He confesses this deplorable fact to the Southern girl he expects to marry. He is in the position of little Bo-peep after she lost her sheep—or rather, as if little Bo-peep's great-grandfather had told her that the sheep had been lost years ago. Little Bo-peep, presumably a child of discretion. would have made no attempt to take up a wild-sheep chase. But the young American does. because the proud Southern girl refuses to marry him until he finds out the name his ancestor had dropped; he succeeds with much ease. He becomes the Marquis de Saint-Sorlin. Having elevated him to this pinnacle, Mrs. Dahlgren shows how strong his American blood is. "First and best," writes the Marquis de Saint-Sorlin, "I love my native country, America, and I meet the inexorable fate of its men. I have become matter-of-fact. I have embraced a profession. I am in league with the great power of this nation. My whole life is now devoted to romancing, but in a business way; for, dear reader, I am a journalist." *A Lost Name* will not bring a blush to the cheek of any young person.

Laurence Tadema; "Love's Martyr."

Lorenz Alma-Tadema has made himself famous by his sensuous—not sensual—pictures, in which color runs riot, the green sea bathes an azure sky, Roman figures lounge among poppies, oleanders, and peacocks on white marble terraces. The artist was born in Holland, though he is now a naturalized British citizen. "Alma" was added to his family name, Tadema, to give him a better place in the alphabetical picture-catalogues. His daughter, Lau-

rence, now offers the world a novel. The style is wonderfully clear and idiomatic. *Love's Martyr* (New York: D. Appleton & Co.) is an intense story. It would have pleased Rossetti. It is an analysis, very skillfully made, of an unusual and morbid character. The manner of the book deserves the praise it has received. Miss Austen herself could not have described the bucolic English squire's family more forcibly and with less effort, and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* has no passages stronger than some in *Love's Martyr*. The book is quite as unhealthy as *Jane Eyre*. Who is "love's martyr?" The woman who marries a man, having offered herself as the mistress of another man and been rejected? Or the man who, knowing this, takes her to be his wife and then suffers the agonies of jealousy, founded on this fact and on the knowledge that she holds her lover still in her heart? Laurence Alma-Tadema does not answer this question. Her affair—she evidently holds the theory of the realists—is merely to present a picture as she sees it, not to draw conclusions or answer questions. Rosamund, the heroine of *Love's Martyr*, is a girl who has been brought up without religion. Her father, an Englishman, married her mother in Paris. They were both murdered during the Reign of Terror, and the child is sent home to her uncle, who is a country squire of the eighteenth century, coarse, brutal, good-hearted when in the humor. The child is adopted by him, and, in her new home, leads the life of an outlaw. Mrs. Merry, the squire's wife, is equally coarse and much meaner. She gives a sketch of her first introduction to Rosamund:

"'O Mr. Field! if you only knew what an eyesore and a worrit that girl's been to me, year in and year out; and I was always taking her part, too, against Mr. Merry, when he might sometimes have killed her—and no wonder. I've had to be as a mother to her, and

she only my husband's brother's child, too—none of my flesh. If I lived till Doomsday I should never forget the night Mr. Merry brought the child into my room. It was past ten of the clock, and a cloud upon his face such as you never saw the like. "Matilda," he said, "here's another daughter for you," and he swore. "Daughter?" I cried. "Yes," he answered; "it's Charles' child. Charles and his wife are dead." It was the very middle of the Reign of Terror, and I felt mighty sick. I looked at the little, black, shivering brat, and I could 'a' cried. You never saw a plainer child, and my own all as fair as angels. Then, would you believe it, she ran up to me, all travel-stained as she was—she was no higher than that table; no one would 'a' thought such a wee codling could grow into the Maypole she is now—and she clutched hold of my knee with her cold, dirty hands, and burst out crying with her face in my lap; and I with a nice new poplin on with flowered sprigs, that I'd had a-purpose to please Mr. Merry. "That'll do, miss," I cried; "and don't you know you're a very naughty child to cry for nothing? Stand up! —for shame!" And George fell a-laughing, spite that he was furious almost to bursting with rage at having his brother's leavings thrust upon him. "The creature don't understand a word you say, my dear," he cried; "so I'd just save my breath to blow my broth, if I was you." I thought I should 'a' dropped. "Lord preserve me!" said I, "what kind of a heathen thing have you brought me here?" And as I jerked her up a little gimcrack of a crucifix that she wore caught in my lace ruffle, that had taken me three months to work, if a day, and tore a whole inch into shreds. "You bad, wicked child, I cried, "look what you've done!" And, after giving her the smack she deserved, I just pulled the sinful idol off her neck and tossed it into the fire. And if you'd seen the way the little imp shrieked and wailed in her idolatrous tongue, and wholloped me with her tiny fists when I drew her from the fire—for she'd actually put her hands into the flames for the bawble, and she has got the scar to this day."

Rosamund, made desperate by the coldness and selfishness of those around her, cries out against the God whom these smug and self-satisfied "Christians" pretend to represent:

"I have asked Him for a hundred things, and he never heard my prayers, so I don't ask him now. I thought at first it was be-

cause I did not know his book; so I tried to read it and could not. And I listened at church, but they were always the same old words I couldn't understand; and sometimes I called for the sweet Lady that my mother made me love, but she never came. Oh! I can show you that He hates me."

Defiant and desperate, left by the man who had taught her to love him, and then, from ambition, refused to marry her and, from regard to her, to degrade her, she marries the narrator of the story. At last her lover, who is dying, catches a glimpse of her, and they die together. It is a very hopeless book, and a very morbid one.

Atla, by Mrs. J. Gregory Smith (New York: Harper & Bros.) is a reconstruction of the fabled island of Atlantis. It is a beautiful fantasy, vigorously sustained. Its binding is exquisite.

Balzac: "Cesar Birotteau."

The impression that much modern literature gives is that it would be esteemed by its authors an impertinence if the existence of God were mentioned in their presence. It is a relief to turn to Balzac—a translation of whose *César Birotteau* has been just issued by Roberts Brothers, of Boston—to find, in spite of the recurrent presence of "the goddess Lubricity" in many of his scenes, that we are never allowed to forget that right is right and wrong wrong; that sin is a reality, and that Christianity has a profound effect on the consciences of human beings, however low they may fall from its standard. In *César Birotteau* there is much more plain-speaking than in *Pendennis*, although Thackeray tells us that many estimable ladies ceased to read that novel because he admitted into his pages suggestions of the daily conversations of their husbands and sons. These ladies belonged to that class of scrupulous Protestant readers who have been moved to

declaim more than once against the immorality of the Catholic Church because they had come across the Table of Sins for use in examination of conscience in the prayer-books. "Protestants," one of these rigorous ladies told the present writer, "never admit the existence of such things." In *César Birotteau* there are many words and suggestions which point to the effect of motives that our horrified Protestant friend found in the Table of Sins. But there is none of that half-veiled apology for licentiousness and that nasty pruriency which is a plague on English literature of fiction—especially on that written by women. As to modern French literature, nothing can be more depressing than the view it offers of the French life of to-day. M. Daudet tells us that religion is formalism, and M. Zola that it has no vital being in the hearts, much less the minds, of his countrymen, and that it disappears from the imaginations of his countrywomen at the sight of a lover. M. Balzac's *César Birotteau* restores our belief in the possibility that the French people are not, as Matthew Arnold would have us believe, devoted to the worship of Priapus. A *bourgeoisie* blessed with so much purity and honesty as that of which César Birotteau is a type cannot have lost its faith and principles. The simple and fervent *Pater Noster* of César Birotteau, when all the plans of his life have failed, is truer to life than all the pages of analysis which a modern pen would have given us. Twenty years ago Balzac was called immoral. To-day fiction has advanced so greatly that we turn to his pages to find an antidote for the flippant assumption that the God of the Christian and his Commandments are figments of the middle ages. It is refreshing to read of a villain who is afraid to die and of an honest man whose honesty is the result of his fear of God and his attention to his religious duties—not of a combination of accidents.

We do not approve of Balzac's works,—if César Birotteau teaches a good lesson, most of Balzac's works teach bad ones.

VIII.

Octave Feuillet: "La Morte."

A novel which has appeared in French, and in English, has excited much attention, because it is supposed to be an apology for religion in education. It is *La Morte*, by M. Octave Feuillet. It has been running as a serial in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*. M. Feuillet, whose very pure novel *Sybille* is, like M. Halévy's *Abbé Constantin*, one of the few modern French novels that recording angels do not want to blot out altogether, has undertaken to solve a problem. In France men are educated in infidelity, while women are brought up strict Catholics, he says, speaking of polite society. He goes on to show that materialistic education may be sufficient to keep a man honorable, but that it must help to plunge a woman into crime. According to his theory, a man may be an infidel and yet possess every virtue, but a woman without religion becomes at once a fiend. His heroine is a devout young girl who marries an atheist in order to save his soul. Her character is represented to be of the highest type; but, notwithstanding her virtues and self-sacrifice, she does not succeed in making him accept the teachings of the church. She is poisoned by her rival—a daughter of nature educated godlessly. He marries this woman, who believes that the soul dies with the body. He finds out her baseness, the result of her education. To repair the wrong to his wife, and to clear himself in her eyes of the suspicion that he had murdered her, he becomes religious. And thus M. Feuillet answers the

question, Can women be safely educated without religion? His answer is, No. They are weaker than men, emotional, impulsive. While civilized society may exist and progress, if all the men were to carry out the theories of Voltaire to their modern conclusion, it would suffer if women were to be trusted to make their own code of morals from Comte and Darwin: Women need a deposit of faith, M. Feuillet teaches, but men can get along without it. This is M. Feuillet's apology for religion in education. It has been received very seriously by a large part of French society, which discusses questions answered eighteen hundred years ago as if they were new. It touches an evil spot—inadequately, it is true, but with at least a leaning towards the side of faith.

Mr. Frank Stockton's novel, *The Late Mrs. Null* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), will not disappoint the admirers of that most genuine and quietest of American humorists. The readers of *Rudder Grange* will not find a Pomona in *The Late Mrs. Null*, but they will find three or four excellent substitutes for that serious personage. Mrs. Null herself—a strange and paradoxical creation of the author's—is so absurdly real and yet so entirely impossible that one cannot think of her without laughing. Mr. Stockton's sketches of Virginian life and scenery are faithful and artistic. Bits of description as true as this are scattered through his pages:

"Beyond the large garden, at the back of this arbor, stretched a wide field with a fringe of woods at its distant edge, gay with the colors of autumn. The sky was bright and blue, and fair white clouds moved slowly over its surface; the air was sunny and warm, with humblebees humming about some late-flowering shrubs; and high in the air floated two great turkey-buzzards with a beauty of motion surpassed by no other living thing, with never a movement of their wide-spread wings, except to give them the necessary inclination as they rose with the wind, and then turned and descended in a long

sweep, only to rise again and complete the circle; sailing thus for hours, around and around, their shadows moving over the fields below them."

Speculation is rife in the country hamlet concerning Mrs. Null's husband, who is a non-existent person. One of the loungers in the store shows his deep knowledge of the springs of feminine action. "I reckon his wife must be 'spectin' him," said the man on the brogan case, "from her comin' after fancy vittles."

Aunt Patsy and her mistress, the awful Mrs. Keswick of the purple sunbonnet, are unique personalities:

"'Aunt Patsy,' said Miss Annie, 'would there be any objection to our going to your church to-morrow!'

"The old woman gave her head a little shake. 'Dunno,' she said. 'As a gin'ral rule we don't like white folks at our preachin's. Dey's got dar chu'ches an' dar ways, an' we's got our chu'ches an' our ways. But den its's dif'rent wid you all. An' you all's not like white folks in gin'ral, 'an 'specially strawngers. You all isn't strawngers now. I don't reckon dar'll be no 'jections to your comin', ef you set sollum; an' I know you do dat, Miss Annie, 'coz you did it when you was a little girl. Dar is white folks wot comes to a culled chu'ch fur nothin' else but to larf. *De debbil gets dem folks, but dat don' do us no good, Miss Annie, an' we'd rudder dey stay away.*'"

The rude and boisterous religious exercises of the negroes—a mixture of Methodism and African paganism, culminating in the barbaric "Jerusalem jump"—are described with power. The death of Aunt Patsy is a fine piece of reticent word-painting. Mr. Stockton seizes his hearer by the button-hole and pours into his ears a tale of absurdities that seem more than probable. He smiles a little to intensify his gravity, but he never laughs until the end of his story, and then it is only with his eyes. It is hard to tell whether he is smiling with his hearer or at him, but the effect is delightful all the same.

Mr. F. Marion Crawford's new book is *A Tale of a Lonely Parish* (New York: Macmillan & Co.) The grandiloquent writer of *Mr. Isaacs* and *Zoroaster* is here unrecognizable. The quaintness of *A Roman Singer* is absent. The style is, however, limpid and good, but the story is hardly worth the telling in the number of pages Mr. Crawford has devoted to it. The personages of the story are very quiet and commonplace. It turns out that Mrs. Goddard, the amiable widow who has come to live with her little daughter in the lonely parish, is the wife of a convict. She is a cold-hearted woman, and the scene in which her husband returns, having escaped from jail, brings out her indifference and selfishness—qualities which the author does not seem to see. The desire of Mr. Crawford to kill the poor wretch, so that his wife can marry the squire, shows interest in the happiness of Mrs. Goddard, but it is somewhat brutal. Why Mr. Crawford should have laid the scene of his story in England is a question hard to answer at a time when this country is deluged with cheap and nasty English reprints. Why he should have taken the trouble to write the story at all is a still harder question.

Lady E. Lawless: "Hurrish."

Hurrish: A Study, by the Hon. Emily Lawless (Harper & Bros.), is an exceedingly disagreeable book. It pretends to be a study of life in North Clare. It is written with some cleverness and it is not without signs of talent, which facts make all the more unpardonable the deliberate attempt of the author to give the impression that the Irish peasant, on his native heath, is a bloodthirsty pagan in principle and a Thug in practice. It is true that Gerald Griffin painted Danny Mann hideously, but he did not create for us a colony of Danny Manns and ask us to be-

lieve that they were natural products of Irish soil. If Miss Lawless' view of the rural population of Ireland is largely shared by ladies of her class, it is not strange that the landlord is regarded by his tenants as without sympathy or even common humanity. *Hurrish* is a libel on Irish life —the more necessary to be denounced that it has an appearance of truth. Edna Lyall's *In the Golden Days* (Harper & Bros.) is a story of English history of the time of the Restoration. The days, according to Miss Lyall's account, were anything but "golden," and therefore her title may be looked on as ironical. It is a pure, well-told story, in which the interest is most artfully kept up to the end. The historical element is used with skill, but not always with precision.

Tolstoi: "My Religion."

Count Tolstoï, the Russian rival of Turgueneff, has occupied much attention of late. *My Religion* (New York: Crowell) shows the revolt of a mind, shocked by the formalism of a state-enslaved church and the corruption of an artificial yet barbarous society, from the form of Christianity he knew best. Count Tolstoï's religion, newly adopted with intense fervor, is "Christianity without immortality." He would have men find happiness in a life of work, of simplicity, of brotherhood, but happiness only in this life. The nearest approach to this ideal life, supposed to be drawn literally from the Scriptures, is that of the monks of La Trappe or those of St. Benedict. All that he longs for is found in the Catholic Church, but he does not see it. He constructs a religion of his own, obeys the mandate to give all he has to the poor, and goes forth, no longer a Russian nobleman, but, so far as he can make himself one, a Russian peasant. He sums up his scheme of life in these words:

'Everything that once seemed to me important, such as honors, glory, civilization, wealth, the complications and refinements of existence, luxury, rich food, fine clothing, etiquette, have become for me wrong and despicable. Everything that once seemed to me wrong and despicable, such as rusticity, obscurity, poverty, simplicity of surroundings, of food, of clothes, of manners, all have now become right and important to me. I cannot, as I once did, recognize in myself or others titles or ranks or qualities aside from the quality of manhood. I cannot seek for fame or glory; I can no longer cultivate a system of instruction which separates me from men. I can no longer pursue amusements which are oil to the fire of amorous sensuality—the reading of romances and the most of poetry, listening to music, attendance at balls and theatres."

But at the end of all this he sees only that strange contradiction, eternal non-existence. He believes that Christ's mission was divine, but deprives that Life of its crown—the Resurrection. It is a sad book, like all Russian books. The wind of the steppes blows moaningly through them all. *Anna Karénina* (New York: Crowell) is the latest of Tolstoï. It appears before the end of *War and Peace* has been given to the public. *Anna Karénina* is a panorama of Russian life shown to us in a melancholy light. It is a story of sinful love and the gradual degradation of a guilty woman. It is hopeless, sad, true evidently to Russian life; but not to be read, except by those who want to get nearer to that mysterious and semi-barbaric people who will yet be the Greeks or the Goths of Europe. *Anna Karénina* is the work of a close student of human nature and of a literary artist, more robust in method but less sure and exquisite than Turgueneff. It is a book that one drops with deep sadness, for it bears on every page the traces of masterly talent uninspired by one hope that can give real or permanent joy to life. It leaves us to wonder that this whole empty, sad Russian society does not commit suicide.

Keenan; "The Aliens."

Trajan appeared anonymously in a defunct New York magazine. It was followed by *The Money-Makers*, written as a kind of counter-irritant to *The Bread-Winners*. Neither of these novels was of a high rank as a literary work. *The Money-Makers* was characterized by bad taste, and worn French words and phrases quarrelled with the author's English on nearly every page. *The Aliens* (New York: D. Appleton & Co.) is announced to be by the hitherto anonymous author of *Trajan*. It is stronger than *Trajan*, and it has few of the faults of bad taste that made the first half of *The Money-Makers* unendurable. Mr. Keenan has been struck with the opportunities for a good work of fiction in the lives of Irish immigrants. The aliens of his book are an Irish and a German family. The Irish father has what the French call the faults of his qualities, while the German has the virtues of his. The German qualities—as depicted by Mr. Keenan—are lower than those of the Irish, but much more capable of furthering success in life. Hugh Boyne comes to America with his wife and children. His wife is a beautiful woman, a Catholic, who has brought her husband, a Protestant, into the church. Hugh has brought several hundred pounds sterling from Belfast. But the temptation of meeting old and convivial friends is too much for him; he falls lower and lower, becomes utterly brutalized, until his wife — Mr. Keenan makes a natural and pathetic picture of her agony when her children are torn from her to be "raised" by strangers—dies at last insane.

Mr. Keenan has shown keen insight into the possibilities of American life by choosing such a subject; he has made a good deal of it. *The Aliens* has the force of sincerity and truth. But there are some strange inequalities in the book. Lady Molly, for instance, is the wife of an

ex-Tory lord left over in New York after the Revolution; she is an Irish lady, but she habitually uses the vulgarest brogue:

"'Sure, you ought to loike the juke [Wellington], Denny, me lad; he was Irish like ourselves, God bless him!' Lady Molly cried out as Lord Poultney gathered breath for a fresh flight.

"'Yes, Denis, Lord Wellington's family was Irish, and some of his majesty's best troops came from Ireland.'

"'Ye can't make th' Americans believe that, then,' cries Lady Molly, laughing wickedly. 'They think we're all bog-trotters and Rapparees, bedad!'" "She was fond," adds the author, in artless admiration, "of her most piquant Hibernicisms when talking at her own table, and my lord encouraged her with roars of laughter, for it was one of the merry dame's charms to mimic her rural countrymen."

Mr. Keenan's regard for this terrible and impossible female amounts to positive infatuation. A bog-trotter or a Rapparee would be more pleasant company than the example of Irish refinement he has given us. Mr. Keenan's idea of the Irish character is expressed in this paragraph:

"The Celt has the vanity of the Gaul: he loves to love, he loves to be loved; he loves to admire, and he loves to be admired. He loves to be praised, first for his wit, if he have any—if not, for his strength; if he have neither of these, then for his fidelity, piety, or any of the more admirable traits that come from the heart. But if he have none of these, no mental or moral pre-eminence, he is apt to abandon himself with imbecile improvidence to any dullard temptation. He riots in the excess of weakness. Refused the lead in admirable traits, he must be the intrepid law-breaker. He must shame the Ashantee in moral squalor when there is no play in his wit that extracts praise. Tiger and monkey, Voltaire called his countrymen the Gaul. Abdiel and Hecate, the Celt might be summed up. None so faithful when trust is given, none so rancorous when doubt is instilled."

Generalizations are not always so elastic. There are usually a great many spots over which they cannot stretch.

All this seems to mean that if a Celt—an Irishman, Mr. Keenan might just as well have said—has neither mental nor moral good qualities, he sinks as low as he can. In fact, Mr. Keenan might have referred to mankind in general and not to the Celt in particular. Hugh Boyne and his children are scattered. The children lose the mother's faith. Norah, the eldest girl, falls a victim to her attachment to a libertine, and the book closes sadly and sorrowfully. The only consolation we are given is that the German aliens are prominent American citizens and are happy because they are not Celts.

Miss Tincker: "Aurora."

Aurora, Miss Tincker's new novel (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.), is not up to the high mark of her early work. There are descriptive passages in it that remind one, in their delicacy of treatment and poetical flavor, of the exquisite opening of *The House of Yorke;* but the present novel might be by another hand, so little has it of the freshness and elevation of that incomparable story.

Hardy: "The Wind of Destiny."

Mr. Hardy's *But Yet a Woman* is fresh in the novel-reading mind, which may be said to be the popular mind. Like Mr. F. Marion Crawford, Mr. Hardy is one of the fortunate American authors that are sure of what the French call a *succès d'estime. The Wind of Destiny* (exquisitely printed by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is the novel of a pessimist. Mr. Hardy opens his first chapter with a quotation from that diluted Jew and false philosopher, Spinoza: "They who believe that they can speak or keep silence—in a word, act—in virtue of a free decision of the soul, dream with their eyes open." Destiny is blind force which fills the sails of human barks and sends them

hither and thither; some think that a pilot called Will can control their courses, but they who think so dream—this is the teaching of Mr. Hardy's novel, if it is meant to have any teaching. It is written in a style almost worthy of Nathaniel Hawthorne; it has passages of the finest poetry; its dialogue is terse, clear-cut, rapid, and apt—almost too clear-cut and apt to be taken from real life. One cannot read it without acknowledging the talent of the author or without asking, To what end has this talent been employed? And the answer is not satisfactory.

We are introduced to Schonberg, a mysterious old man living in a New England village and looked on with distrust by the inhabitants, and the reader of sensibility is interested in him by this fine passage:

"And there was, in truth, in his nature a solitary summit lifted above mutation and tides. Speculation had busied itself about this man, the more so because of the solitude he carried with him. It is not necessary to have taken a city to excite curiosity or to become worthy the pen of the biographer. Biographer! One can almost see his eye take fire at the word. For what is more presumptuous than to write the history of a man? Trace the red and the black drops to the veins of his ancestors, set his portrait over against the title-page, strand him in a universe of self-seekers, catalogue his tastes, describe his habits, hoard up the meagre incidents—after all, the man escapes you, hid within that zone of infinite repulsion which surrounds the soul as it does the atom."

In the same way the persons buffeted by the wind of destiny seem to escape Mr. Hardy, who is their biographer. They seem to exist, but we see them through a thickening or thinning mist. Aunt Isabel, a subordinate character, a sophisticated old lady, whose manner of conversation is modelled after French idioms, is the most real of all. Having been introduced to Schonberg, we are told an episode of his youth and also presented to Harold Fleming:

"Harold was an enthusiast, Schonberg a neutral—intellectually, for the heart always takes sides. Harold went into raptures over his master, Schonberg called his a philosophical zero. 'You and I,' he said one day contemptuously, 'are types of eclecticism. I shall perish like the donkey, between the trough and the manger, of starvation.' 'And I?' laughed Harold. 'You? You will take the best dish from every table, and die of gluttony.'"

Harold marries and dies, merely, it would seem, that Schonberg shall picturesquely guard his friend's wife and her two charming daughters. Harold's wife, born Madelon Foy in a Breton château, dies later in the New England village, having unconsciously accepted the gift of half Schonberg's fortune, in the belief that it was left her by her husband. Schonberg proves a faithful guardian both of the girls and a patch of violets he cultivates. The violets are in memory of a Breton girl, Noël, who once made his acquaintance in a boat, met him in a ruined chapel, and let him make love to her during a holiday jaunt. The next day her body was found in the river. She left a message for Schonberg, telling him that only by death could she be for ever his, and enclosing some white violets for him.

"'What does it mean. he said holding the message out to Father Pierre."

"A smile of satisfaction lit up the priest's face as he read. 'Come with me,' he replied, leading the way. At the farther angle of the wall he paused before a little mound scarce two feet long, remote from the rest, but carefully kept from the weeds. 'Stoop and read,' he said. There was a single word on the plain wooden cross at the head of the grave: Noël.

"'It is the old story,' said the priest. But she has sprinkled herself with the blood of the sacrifice. Let God, who made the falcons, judge the dove.'"

"Helen of Troy," moralizes Mr. Hardy on this misty episode, "will not deter us, nor the wounds of Cæsar frighten, nor the voice of the king, crying Vanity! from his throne, dismay. What wonder

the stars that once sang for joy are dumb, and the constellations go down in silence?"

One feels like asking, with Mr. Hardy's hero, "What does it mean?" If the erratic Noël meant that, by committing suicide, she could be for ever with Schonberg, she certainly paid her lover of a day a very poor compliment. Did Father Pierre think of this when he smiled on such a serious occasion? If not, why did he smile? Noël's conduct to Schonberg was of the indecorous kind disapproved by all parish priests, and Father Pierre would have been more likely to give the young tourist a plain lecture on morals than to have talked about "sacrificial blood." "Kismet!" is the very unsatisfactory and unmeaning answer.

When Schonberg grows old, nursing his sentimental grief and his violets, he meets in the New England village Gladys Temple and her husband, Jack. Gladys is a charming young woman, who has, by the exercise of invariable tact, made her husband love her. She herself is in love with her cousin Rowan, an artist, who loves one of Schonberg's wards. Gladys is mistress of all the minor arts of life. She can eat with grace; she knows how to make life comfortable; she has a pretty little daughter, Mabel, who goes about with her a great deal; she goes to church when she thinks people expect her to do so, and when she has something to wear. She sees Rowan's preference for another, and, "a toy of chance," she lets herself follow him on a rainy night to his house. He, surprised and shocked, carries her home and enjoins silence on her maid to save her from the effect of such a compromising situation. She has a fever. The maid tells the truth. Jack Temple wishes that he could shoot Rowan, who has been the innocent cause of the trouble, and goes away in his yacht, saying that Gladys will never forgive

herself. Gladys, on her sick-bed, sees remorsefully the mistake of yielding to passion; she says to herself that she loves Jack, but that she cannot live with him without self-respect. The devilish lines seem to hover near her:

> "Why, if the soul can fling the dust aside,
> And naked on the air of heaven ride,
> Were 't not a shame, were 't not a shame, for him
> In this clay carcase crippled to abide?"

"She had time to cry, to see Mabel's face, to struggle with those ponderous doors which closed upon her, to know it was vain." The waters swallow her. Schonberg, dying, cries out that he is but an atom, "swept on by its own inertia, and disappearing as it came, a portent and a wonder." Noël and Gladys have been swept to death, not by their own will, but by the wind of destiny; the same wind has blown others to peace and happiness. "Come, little girl," said he, "let us go to sleep."

It is sad that the manner and matter of this novel, so completely charming in a literary sense, should be devoted to such a hopeless philosophy in the nineteenth century after the birth of Christ. Perhaps Mr. Hardy believes, with Goethe, that a man, to be great, must echo the thoughts of his time; or perhaps he repeats the words of one of his personages: "Of what use is it to paint Madonnas which no one buys? 'The artist can no longer consecrate himself to religious symbolism. The age in which we live demands realities, not emblems.'"

And, as realities, Mr. Hardy offers us the life of a man who lived without an adequate motive, and who died expressing his belief in a Supreme Being, because the wind of destiny pushed him, an atom, through space; and that of a woman who killed herself because she could not forgive herself for a crime she had not committed. Realism in romance imposes impartiality on the author. He sim-

ply sees and describes. He is a photographic instrument; consequently he gives us soulless forms, highly finished, but unsatisfying and colorless.

IX.

Catholic Stories.

Some clever people, whose theories fly complacently over facts, insist that a good Catholic story need only to be written to be read with avidity, and they encourage with hopeful words and pleasant promises Catholics to take up their pens and to write novels. They preach as if an immense audience were waiting to crown with bays, to name in honor, and to confer the necessities of life on the author who would write a good Catholic story.

Now, *The House of Yorke* is one of the best novels ever printed in this country. It is a better novel, as a work of art and a work of fiction, than either *East Angels* or *The Wind of Destiny*. It would be absurd to compare Mr. Crawford's very successful *Tale of a Lonely Parish* with it, so inferior is Mr. Crawford's latest novel to it. And yet we doubt whether five copies of *The House of Yorke* were sold to every thousand of the three other books mentioned. It would be easy to compare the sale of *Ben Hur* with that of *Dion and the Sibyls*, a Catholic story of the highest merit. *Ben Hur's* sale mounts up every year, while there is scarcely any demand for *Dion* and even less for *The House of Yorke*. In the face of these things it is idle to beckon writers to their doom—and the waste-paper man. This cry for more Catholic novels is as false as the demand of Gilder's little poet:

"Give me a theme," the little poet cried,
"And I will do my part."
"'Tis not a theme you need," the world replied:
"You need a heart."

There are themes and writers. But where is the great heart to welcome and cherish them?

De Navery: "The Castle of Coetquen."

In the meantime young Catholics are offered, in lieu of the fine art but doubtful teaching of novelists who are adepts in their work, *The Castle of Coëtquen*, translated from the French of Raoul de Navery, and printed by M. H. Gill, Dublin. This sensational romance has already appeared here under the name of *Partira*. It is full of murder, revenge, treachery, death, and monsters of all kinds. It has no end, and one sees that a sequel, equally horrible, is impending. Dungeons and hidden panels suggest to us the *Castle of Otranto* and Mrs. Ratcliffe's delectable romances done into French and tenderly sweetened with a pious thought when the resemblance to the elder Dumas becomes too apparent. The literary merit of the *Castle of Coëtquen* is on a par with that of the flashy story-papers. There are angelic priests and nuns in it, however; but the last words uttered by Jenny to a virtuous young person are:

"Don't cry. We have a great work to do. Count Florent must pay the price of his crime, and Blanche of Coëtquen must be avenged: for this work we are two."

The *Castle of Coëtquen* is put forth as a novel for Catholics. It is no wonder that Catholics are shy of this sort of thing—fearing that they may be caught with chaff.

Stevenson: "Prince Otto."

Robert Louis Stevenson is a novelist who, like his American brother, the author of *The Wind of Destiny*, is sure to have success with a new book, whether he write well or ill. His *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, a weird sketch full of the interest and power that have

caused Edgar Poe's short stories to be put among the masterpieces of French as well as English literature, is selling rapidly and still one of the books of the year. *Prince Otto: A Romance* (Boston: Roberts Brothers) is a satire on the ways of princes and of men. Mr. Stevenson is an acknowledged master of style, versed in the art of reticence and suggestiveness; his "lightness of touch"—a quality which in late English literature almost becomes a disease—makes everything he writes pleasant, even if it have no other merit. *Prince Otto* is the story of a ruler who neglects the business of his dominions. Gondremark, a would-be Bismarck, governs them for him, with one eye on the possibility of acquiring them himself by warlike diplomacy, and the other on the movements of the Masonic lodges. He hopes to achieve supreme power in Prince Otto's kingdom by means of Masonic intrigues, with which he has silently honeycombed the social fabric of Grünewald. The princess, Otto's wife, despises the frivolity and weakness of her husband; her ambition is excited by Gondremark, and she aims to govern with the help of the prime minister. Gondremark wants only to make her serve his schemes; she, while profiting by his advice and experience, is never unfaithful to the weak and pleasure-loving prince, who finds greater delight in the flattery of court ladies than in doing his duty to his subjects. While wandering incognito the prince hears some plain truths and listens to popular songs about Gondremark and the princess that fill him with anger and shame. He makes a violent attempt to assert his supremacy in the state, and fails through his very violence. The princess takes sides with Gondremark, believing that his projects can alone aggrandize Grünewald. But a crash comes. The secret societies, whom Gondremark had fancied were forces that he might use, suddenly show

in open daylight the badge of the Phœnix and the motto *Libertas*. In a night the little princedom becomes a republic, with the favorite and obsequious servant of the princess, who has been one of the prime movers in the lodges, in an important place.

This is the barest outline of a brilliant sketch almost Machiavellian in its keenness. It is really a delicate but exact etching of social and political life copied from the big historical panorama which has replaced the map of Europe before the eyes of the world since Queen Marie Antoinette played in comedies at Versailles and Lafayette coquetted with the "secret powers." The scene in the council-chamber when Prince Otto asserts his rights is managed with consummate skill and with entire fidelity to the character given by Mr. Stevenson to the *fainéant* ruler of Grünewald. Throughout the story there is an air of the delicate mockery and nineteenth-century cynicism which permeate Gilbert's comedies, but more evanescent and less "humorous." Mr. Stevenson might have spared us one sentence, in deference to that cult of good taste of which he is a foremost acolyte:

> "Under ordinary circumstances the scene at the council-table would have entirely exhausted Otto's store both of energy and anger; he would have begun to examine and condemn his conduct, have remembered all that was true, forgotten all that was just in Seraphina's onslaught; and by half an hour after would have fallen into that state of mind in which a Catholic flees to the confessional and a sot takes refuge with the bottle."

Mr. Stevenson's characterization of a Catholic state of mind is almost enough to cause us to doubt the truth of his minute analyses of other psychical states. There are one or two passages which produce the effect that the love-making of the American theatre had on the old French lady accustomed to Racine and Corneille: they make us

wonder why Mr. Stevenson, with all the poetic license of a prose-poet, should have made them public. One of the best chapters in the book is that which is made up of Sir John Crabtree's memoir of aristocracy in Grünewald. Looking from the picture made by the English tourist to the reality, we are struck by the fact that even a journalist may sometimes be guilty of rash judgment. In the end the prince, the princess, and Gondremark are blown up by the political explosion of the secret societies. But they land on their feet, and the prince and princess find that they are better fitted to be private citizens than to rule a kingdom.

Vernon Lee: "Juvenilia."

Vernon's Lee's *Juvenilia: Being a series of Essays on Sundry Æsthetical Questions* (London: T. Fisher Unwin) is probably the kind of book that our own Miss Augusta Evans might have written, if, in the days when young ladies raved about *St. Elmo*, "culture" and "æstheticism" were fashionable; only Miss Evans would not have posed as an Agnostic. Both Miss Vernon Lee's Agnosticism and her æstheticism are palpably artificial. She has a rush of ideas to the head; and one idea frequently crushes the other in its haste to escape. She looks down the ages, and from the height of her Agnostic pulpit discovers great things for an impatient world. Her one characteristic is to pump up verbal enthusiasm on obscure and sometimes worthless subjects. To adopt a forcible metaphor borrowed from Mr. John Boyle O'Reilly in describing a modern æsthetic tendency, she "looks for rusty nails in barnyard rubbish and spends a life in burnishing them." Her essays are written to enlighten a youth named Carlo, who personifies, no doubt, the young public. On this unhappy being she pours an endless flood of

fine-sounding words. Carlo probably has sense enough to know that his teacher is a *poseuse*, and not even an accomplished one. Her affectation of pretending to believe that real greatness of mind and pure and true love and strength for the work of life are to be found in Agnosticism and the keeping of men in a "renaissance state of soul," is too palpable for any modern youth to accept as genuine. She strives after the unusual. Of course she has a *cultus* for Botticelli. Of course Baudelaire and Villon and other poets, having much nastiness in their works, and therefore dear to what is left of the "æsthetic" school, float through her pages. In order to be unusual she sneers at Shakespeare and incenses Goethe and Schiller. Her reasons for this show how shallow this teacher's thought and reading are. They are as absurd as those which induced Voltaire to call Hamlet "a drunken savage:"

> "I do not believe," she says, "that Hamlet, such as Shakspere wrote him (as distinguished from Hamlet such as we read him), is as realistically conceived, as realistically carried out, as Schiller's Don Carlos, much less as Goethe's Tasso; nor are Romeo and Juliet realized like Faust and Gretchen, Egmont and Clärchen, Max and Thekla."

This "I" that demolishes the edifices of centuries, that blows Christianity aside more in sorrow than anger, that analyzes what it is ignorant of, is thoroughly typical of the spirit which, in order to assume to be learned, avoids the great highways and searches in alleys and corners for bric-à-brac that it at once demands the world shall enshrine.

Lord Lytton: "Baldine."

While young people of this generation who have just learned to read follow sympathetically the adventures of

Glaucus and Nydia, and delight in *The Caxtons*, the creator of these charming myths is made the subject of an unpleasant book, supposed to be founded on the letters of his wife, Lady Bulwer, which destroys some illusions in regard to Lord Lytton's honest belief in the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. After all, "his worst he kept, his best he gave," and such revelations ought not to be encouraged. His son, the present Lord Lytton—who must be in an unenviable state of mind to have to choose between his mother's statement that his father was a brute, or the other view that his mother was a shrew with a tendency to "exaggeration"—has translated from the German Karl Erdmann Edler's *Baldine and other Stories* (New York: Harper & Bros.) Carlyle, according to Lord Lytton, over-praised some German novelists—*Dii Minores*—and neglected others. Lord Lytton, in introducing Edler, intends to repair this injustice. His preface is admirably written, and is remarkable for one quality unusual in modern literature—sincere enthusiasm. He honestly believes that Edler is an exquisite writer of idyls that are intensely individual and original, and he says so in a short essay full of intimate knowledge of Germany and German literature.

"Baldine," the first of the three stories in the book, opens in a forest. Baldine is an orphan left by her grandfather in the care of an old deaf woman. The child plays alone and in silence; she learns to throw aside for ever all things that disappoint her once. Her doll, her ball, and the doctor, who cannot save her grandfather from death, are cast away with hatred and distrust. But she still trusts in One:

> "The ants, the snails, the butterflies, and all the dumb creatures are sometimes glad and sometimes sorry; and they all have fine threads on their heads, with which they speak without a word, as Zenz speaks with her fingers. Baldine knows all this quite well.

"But at home she knows One who is also dumb, but never glad, always sorry. That is our Lord God, who hangs upon the cross in the corner of the room, high above the table. The cross is of black wood, and fastened to it is the white God. He cannot even speak with his fingers, for both hands are nailed to the cross. The drops of blood run down over his forehead and breast, from his hands and feet. His face is very pale and mournful; one cannot look at him without weeping.

"Once Baldine climbed upon a chair and thence on to the table to look at him closely; but, when quite near, he looked even still more mournful. Then Baldine leaned her cheek against his bleeding arm, as at other times she used to lean it against the grandfather's coat-sleeve, and wept. She stroked the pale, worn cheeks, and said through her sobs:

"'Poor God! be not so sad, dear God!'

"But he remained still as sad as ever and did not smile, as her grandfather always did when she stroked his sleeve. Then she grew angry at the nails which hurt his hands and feet; and she tore and tugged at them till her cheeks were glowing, her curls all tumbled, and her little fingers bleeding. The grandfather before his death once found her in this condition."

Baldine grows up and goes to live at the miller's. She sits on Sundays and prays near the "dead-planks" on which her grandfather and the old woman, her friend, were laid. Church and churchyard are so far away that it is almost impossible to reach them through the snow-laden mountain-paths. The bodies of the dead are laid on planks until carried to their resting-place. The villagers cannot go often to the churchyard, so the "dead-planks" are put against beech-trees in the forest as remembrances that the dead need prayers:

"The poor souls, say the folk of the forest, suffer in purgatory just so long as upon earth their dead-planks stand; but the planks of the rich last longest, for the paint upon them retards the progress of their decay."

Baldine becomes known as the beauty of the village, and her voice develops remarkably. Some Italians come

to the forest to work. Among them are Toniello and Beppo. Beppo admires Baldine, and, being bad at heart, hates Toniello, whom Baldine promises to marry, though he knows no German and she no Italian. All is arranged for the marriage, when Toniello is brought home dying through Beppo's plotting.

Baldine prays frantically before the crucifix for the life of Toniello. But the priest begins the prayers for the dying.

"Toniello was dead.

"Once again that dreadful cry!

"And then, after a painful silence which no one dared to break, Baldine rose, with tearless eyes and a bitter, disdainful smile upon her lips. All the melancholy softness of her features was turned into the hardness of frozen ice.

"She deliberately lifted the crucifix high above her head and dashed it against the wall, from which the broken wood flew splintered in all directions."

Baldine has been disappointed by God, therefore she no longer believes in God. This is a strange and horrible climax. So far the story has been told with the quaintness and simplicity of Hans Christian Andersen, though at times Edler has the bad taste to interject some sophisticated remark showing himself superior to the villagers he writes about. But now comes an anti-climax scarcely justifying Lord Lytton's praise of him. Baldine becomes a famous opera-singer. Toniello's foster-brother, a count, offers to marry her. The count is a devout Catholic; Baldine tells him she has no belief and that she does not love him. They marry, however. A child is born, but she does not change. One day the angel of death threatens the child. Then follows fearful suspense. At last the child is declared out of danger. Then Baldine says to the count:

"'I love you, Gaetano! I love you very dearly and deeply, only I did not know it.'

"And then her hand glides again caressingly across his arm.

"'Go now,' she murmurs, 'to our child, Gaetano! Embrace for me the good Dottore Corri, as well as the other physician. I will follow you, but let me linger here a moment. I wish first to pray, Gaetano—to pray to your God!'

"He looses his embrace and goes to the rescued child.

"Above the *prie-dieu* hangs the dumb God upon the cross, mute and sad.

"The sunbeam falls upon the stooping face of the dumb God and on the upturned forehead of the woman, whose hands are stretched out to him in prayer. The blood-drops on the brow of the divine image glow like kingly rubies, and the tear-drops falling from the woman's eyes shine pure as orient pearls in the beam that has kindled both.

"And around these two silent figures the dawn grows slowly brighter."

This is temporarily satisfactory as an ending. But what if Baldine should suffer another affliction and feel that God had again disappointed her? Would she break her new crucifix? Religion introduced into stories for dramatic effect is generally a mistake. Neither religion nor the story is helped by it. Lord Lytton's literary instinct is true in the choosing of "Baldine" as an unusually well-written story. Edler's artistic treatment of his theme in a small space might serve as a model for some of the lumbering, expansive English novelists. "Notre Dame des Flots" is a very sad story of the sufferings of a wife who, even in death, was denied the love of the daughter for whom she had struggled and suffered. But there is no bitterness in it. And in these stories, as well as in the slighter sketch, "A Journey to the Grossglöckner," the elevating influence of the Catholic faith and the supremacy of virtue over vice are ungrudgingly admitted—more, perhaps, as facts which a true artist must express than with extraordinary sympathy with them.

X.

Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *The Gates Between* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) will hardly have the popularity of her *Gates Ajar*, by which it has no doubt been suggested. It is the record of a man's existence after death. Dr. Esmerald Thorne marries, late in life, an excellent woman. He is a very busy and irritable man. He became "uncontrollably angry" at times, without thinking that he had "no more right to do so than to get drunk." Dr. Thorne enters his house one night in an unusually bad humor. The prelude to the "taking off" which left him "between the gates," in a very uncomfortable and unsatisfactory position, is this speech:

"'I am due at the hospital in twenty-five minutes,' I went on excitedly. 'Chirurgeon is behaving like Apollyon. If I'm not there to handle him nobody will. The whole staff are afraid of him—everybody but me. We sha'n't get the new ward built these two years if he carries the day to-night. I've got a consultation at Decker's—the old lady is dying. Chowder? I wish you'd had a good, clear soup. I don't feel as if I could touch chowder. I hope you have some roast beef better than the last. You mustn't let Parsnip cheat you. Quail? There's no nourishment in a quail for a man in my state. The gas leaks. Can't you have it attended to? Hurry up the coffee! I must swallow it and go. I've got more than ten men could do.'"

By way of an excuse for this irritation we are told that Dr. Thorne had that day lost ten thousand dollars, that his boots were wet, and that his child was teething. To add fuel to the flame, his wife behaves with exasperating humility. Dr. Thorne leaves, declaring that he ought not to have married at all, or married a woman with a little wifely spirit. Then he goes away, half turning back with a touch of remorse; but his horse is restless, and he dashes off. The horse runs away with him; he is thrown out of his carriage and killed. But, nevertheless, he tells

his story. After the accident "a young priest passed by, saying an Ave with moving lips and unworldly eyes." The late doctor, who, during his mad career in the carriage, has run into a landau occupied by a lady and a child, asks whether they have been injured. "Nay," he said, gazing at me with a luminous look—'nay, I see nothing.' After an instant's hesitation the priest made the sign of the cross both upon himself and me, and then stretched his hands in blessing over me, and silently went his way. I thought this very kind of him, and I bowed as we parted, saying aloud, 'Thank you, father;' for my heart was touched, despite myself, at the manner of the young devotee."

Dr. Thorne had been somewhat of a materialist in life, consequently he is made to hover among the money-getters. But gradually he gets into better company. He meets a devout soul, one of his former patients, who is happy in this intermediate state, while he is tormented and miserable; but this soul had faith, and he had not. After a time he enters a community of spirits who wait with the utmost joy for the coming of the Lord of love, and the doctor is joined by his little boy, who has died on earth. The doctor, when this shining Presence comes, does not see it. He has been blind on earth, and he is blind still. The little child hears the spirits in probation singing the song of faith. "I cannot sing that pretty song," said the boy sadly. 'There is nobody to teach me. Father, I wish you *were* a learned man.' Now this smote me to the heart, so that I would even have lifted my voice and sought to join the chant for the child's sake and to comfort him; but when I would have done so, behold I could not lift my soul; it resisted me like a weight too heavy for my lips, for in this land song never rises higher than the soul."

At last the sceptic cries out, "Thou great God, if there be a God, reveal thyself unto my immortal soul, if I have a soul immortal." His wife joins him, and the united family praise Almighty God between the gates of earth and heaven.

There are incongruities in this book, some theatricalities of style; but it is a very pathetic book and a very womanly book. No Catholic can see this attempt to probe the secrets of "probation" without a sigh and an earnest prayer that the writer's groping after truth may be fully answered in this world.

Besant: "Katharine Regina.

Katharine Regina, by Walter Besant (New York: Harper & Bros.), and *Miser Fairbrother*, by B. L. Farjeon, same publishers, are sure of a large sale. Besant is a favorite just now, because he persuades his readers that in following his characters they are helping along a great reform in the lives of the working-people of London. Mr. Besant is a humanitarian; he thinks that people can be made and kept good by clean rooms, fresh air, baths, good music, and innocent amusements. There is no doubt that the horrible crowding, the lack of any substitute for the pleasures of the gin-shop or of the beer-saloon, the monotonous toil of the poor in large cities, affect them and their children as the absence of sunshine affects plants. There are sins to which the penury of the poor makes temptation easy. But Mr. Besant's plans for a large pleasure-palace for working men and women, and for the securing of fresh air, comfortable rooms, and rational amusements for them, would prove abortive if directed only by the "religion of humanity." The impression one gets from Mr. Besant's novels is that he, a man of heart and talent, kindly takes care of the people whom God

forgets! God, if recognized at all, is always a long distance away in Mr. Besant's schemes. He and his people are expert in the art of helping themselves, and, if they have any time to spare, they are willing to help God in managing the world! In *Katharine Regina*, as in *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, the problem of providing better homes for working-girls is considered. Mr. Besant is dissatisfied with institutions such as the late Mr. Stewart planned for them. He thinks they ought to be allowed to receive young men in the evenings. From all this we gather that Mr. Besant has nothing better, in spite of all his elaborate and interesting writing on the subject, to offer than the old plan of providing for lonely girls—that is, by marriage.

Mr. Besant is a keen observer, and his sympathy is always alert for the sufferings of the London poor. He shows that no creature is so helpless as a young girl of good principles cast on the world without preparation for the battle of life. Katharine tries to be a governess. The market is over-crowded; she loses her place and comes very near to despair and death, when she is saved by the return of her lover and marriage. Mr. Besant does well to point out the ulcers at the root of a social system which substitutes selfishness for Christian charity, which helps Dives to ignore Lazarus by teaching him that a machine-like system of alms-giving may quiet his conscience. But Mr. Besant would do well to remember that the elevation that may come from clean and well-ventilated rooms and popular concerts cannot reach much beyond the surface. It is foolish to teach the mass of people that amusements and luxuries should be some of the objects of life, and these things belong of right to them. Mr. Besant seems to follow Mr. John Bright in this abortive and dangerous teaching. Mr. Besant, in *Katherine*

Regina, shows in the character of the young German, Dittmer, two of the remedies which must be internally applied—and by themselves—to the great mass of men to-day before they can begin to feel that poverty may be made endurable. These remedies are persistent industry and frugality. The young German is poor, yet he does not suffer; he is hopeful; he enjoys a moderate amount of play after his work. If many of our young American clerks who see no "future" before them had the self-denial to appreciate these remedies, there would be more happiness among them.

"'I have learnt what I could—mathematics, languages, book-keeping, short-hand, physical geography, commercial and political history, and the present condition of trade over all the world. I know every harbor and its exports and imports, and the principal merchants who carry on its trade.

"'Modern trade wants all this knowledge. There will very soon be no more English merchants, because our young men will not learn the new conditions of trade. In every office there must be clerks who can write and speak foreign languages. Your young men will not learn them, and your schools cannot teach them. Then we come over—we who have learned them. For my part, I can write and read English, Swedish, Danish, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and German. Do you think we shall be content to stay here as clerks? No, no. Do you think that I have come here to sit down with forty pounds a year? We are cheap, we German clerks. You say so. Mein Gott! you will find us dear. We are learning your trade: we find out your customers and your correspondents; we learn your profits, and we undersell you. We do not go away. We remain. And presently, instead of an English house, there will be a German house in its place, because your young men are so stupid that they will not learn.

"'I study English commerce—I study how it began and why it is now coming to an end. The English clerk will not learn anything, and expects to be paid like an Amstrichter at least. In Deutschland we learn, and we are poor at first. *Ja wohl!* we are poor, but we can wait. It is your high salaries in your army, in your navy, in your church, in your trade, in your administration, which ruin Great

Britain. Everywhere the German merchant drives out the Englishman and the American ; your commerce goes out of your hands ; for the moment only it remains in London, thanks to the Germans and the Jews. When we have taken Antwerp it will all go there—all—and where will be your London then? All—all shall be Deutsch.' "

Dittmer here puts his finger on some truths that Americans, as well as Englishmen, are learning, and will fully learn when it is too late. *Katharine Regina*, as a novel, is not worth much. As a suggestive essay on a great social question it has value.

Farjeon: "Miser Farebrother."

Mr. Farjeon gained his reputation by a supposed resemblance to Dickens. If this ever existed it has now entirely disappeared. *Miser Farebrother* has no depth of any kind. It is a crude story, whose personages seem to be painted mechanically on a hard, flat surface. There is the distractingly amiable young woman, who is the daughter of an utterly bad old man, the villainous and doting mother of an evil and ungrateful son, the perfect young man, the murder, the trial of the wrong person, the acquittal, and the death of the wicked people. The rest can easily be supplied by any reader of novels.

The author of *St. Elmo*, Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson, was once the most popular of American novelists. But this was about the time of the war. Then *St. Elmo* was a frequent subject of conversation and admiration among young ladies. If there are ladies now alive who read *St. Elmo* when it first came out, it may edify them to verify the impressions of their youth by means of *At the Mercy of Tiberius*, Mrs. Evans Wilson's latest book. It was, perhaps, in *St. Elmo*, that the world was told that "man is a limitless microcosm." At any rate, there were many similarly fine sayings in it, and there are many more fine

sayings in *At the Mercy of Tiberius*. But we are anxious to know whether the young ladies of 1863, who are now the young ladies of 1888—for nobody ever really grows old—will find the satisfaction in this new book which they found in the other? We fear not; for Helen Mar in the *Scottish Chiefs*, and even Catharine Seton in *The Abbot*, are in 1888 not what they were in 1863. We are the same, of course, but the books have somehow changed.

Wilson (Augusta Evans): "At the Mercy of Tiberius."

At the Mercy of Tiberius is not a story of ancient Rome. It is a tale of Ancient and Modern Nowhere. The people in it are supposed to live in one of the Southern States. Beryl is the heroine's name. Her mother has been disowned by her proud father because she married a foreigner named Ignace Brentano. Beryl supports her by making sketches and painting Christmas cards. But Beryl resolves to meet her grandfather and to wrest some money, badly needed by her mother, from him. They meet. They are well matched. Their vocabulary is limitless. He begins:

"'Are you some exiled goddess travelling *incognito?*' [in other days Mrs. Evans Wilson would have written *incognita*—or are we more critical now?] 'If we lived in the "piping days of Pan," I should flatter myself that "ox-eyed Juno" had honored me with a call as a reward of my care of her favorite bird.'"

When the proud general finds out who she is he stares "at the majestic form and the faultless face looking so proudly down upon him as from an inaccessible height," and he draws his breath "with a labored, hissing sound." "A stranger," she cries, "but a lady, every inch. I demand the respect due from a gentleman." For a moment they eye each other "as gladiators awaiting the sig-

nal;" then General Darrington springs up, and "with a bow, stately and profound as if made to a duchess," he replies, "And in the name of Southern chivalry, I swear you shall receive it." She "begins to walk slowly up and down the floor; and smothering an oath under his heavy moustache, the old man sinks back in his chair." She throws up her hand "with an imperious gesture, not of deprecation but of interdict, and all the strong calm in her face seemed shivered by a passionate gust that made her eyes gleam like steel under an electric flash."

The general and his granddaughter "go on" in this way for some time. They part in anger, and that same night the general is murdered. "Tiberius" is the prosecuting attorney in the case against Beryl for the murder of her grandfather. His real name is Lennox Dunbar, and we are informed that he was like a bust of Tiberius. During the trial the agony of suspense and three-syllabled words is terrible. The mildest thing is this speech:

> "There is no heaven on earth, but the nearest approach to it, the outlying suburbs whence we get bewildering glimpses of beatitude beyond, is the season of courtship and betrothal. In the magical days of sweetheartdom a silvery, glorifying glamour wraps the world, brims jagged black chasms with glittering mist, paves rugged paths with its shimmering folds, and tenderly covers very deep in rose-leaves the clay feet of our idols. That wonderful light shines only once full upon us, but the memory of it streams all along the succeeding journey; follows us up the arid heights, throws its mellow after-glow on the darkening road, as we go swiftly down the slippery hill of life."

Classic names and allusions strew the pages of *At the Mercy of Tiberius* like broken rainbows. Beryl, after uttering the most impassioned speeches, flavored with a *consommé* made from Lemprière's Dictionary and an encyclopædia, is imprisoned for the murder of her grandfather. To add pathos to Beryl's imprisonment Mrs.

Evans Wilson tells us that she was born on the Fourth of July—"Independence Day." Lennox Dunbar, the "Tiberius," falls in love with Beryl. After a number of improbable episodes it is found that Beryl's brother tried to steal General Darrington's valuables, and that during a struggle General Darrington was killed by lightning. The erring brother becomes a Jesuit and dies an edifying death among his Jesuit friends—"cowled monks," in the picturesque language of the author. Notwithstanding the two pagan mottoes from Emerson which adorn the title-page, the book shows genuine respect for Christianity.

Harris: "Free Joe."

One of the most charming young women in modern fiction is Helen Eustis in "Azalia," one of Joel Chandler Harris's short stories collected in his last book, *Free Joe, and Other Georgian Sketches* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons). The title "Azalia" would, judging by the ordinary short story, lead one to suppose it was a girl's name, and that the girl was perhaps an untutored Cracker maiden who, meeting a "city chap," fell in love with him and died in the most pathetic way. It is an agreeable disappointment to find that Azalia is the name of a place in Georgia. Helen is a witty and unaffected Bostonian. Mr. Harris does not tell us this; he lets us make Helen's acquaintance. Miss Tewksbury, Helen's aunt, is afraid of the Ku-klux, and when the young lady is ordered to Azalia for her health Miss Tewksbury's fear of danger becomes almost a certainty.

"'Dr. Buxton,' Helen says, 'is a life-long Democrat, consequently he must know all about it. Father used to tell him he liked his medicine better than his politics, bitter as some of it was; but in a case of this kind Dr. Buxton's politics have a distinct value. He

will give us the grips, the signs, and the passwords, dear aunt, and I dare say we shall get along comfortably.'"

And they do. Their experiences in the South are pleasant. Goolsby, the book-agent, is delightful. He says to the ex-Confederate General Garwood, speaking of a book he is selling:

"'It's a history of our own great conflict, *The Rise and Fall of the Rebellion*, by Schuyler Paddleford. I don't know what the blamed publishers wanted to put it "rebellion" for. I told 'em, says I, "Gentlemen, it'll be up-hill work with this in the Sunny South. Call it 'The Conflict,'" says I. But they wouldn't listen, and now I have to work like a blind nigger splittin rails. If sech a book is got to be circulated around here, it better be circulated by some good Southron—a man that's a kind of antidote to the poison, as it were.'"

The discussions between General Garwood and Miss Tewksbury on slavery are amusing. Miss Tewksbury insists that there was no good in slavery:

"'You must admit that but for slavery the negroes who are here would be savages in Africa. As it is, they have had the benefit of more than two hundred years' contact with the white race. If they are at all fitted for citizenship, the result is due to the civilizing influence of slavery. It seems to me that they are vastly better off as American citizens, even though they have endured the discipline of slavery, than they would be as savages in Africa.'"

"Azalia," with its pleasant atmosphere, in which good-humor plays the part of oxygen, is an excellent story. The other tales in the book possess that unaffectedness and spontaneity characteristic of Mr. Harris' method, from which nothing could be more different than that of the other Southern writer, Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson.

Crawford: "Paul Patoff."

Mr. Marion Crawford's industry and versatility seem boundless. *Marzio's Crucifix* is hardly noticed when *Among the Immortals* is announced and *Paul Patoff* (New

York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) actually appears. It shows no falling off in style; Mr. Crawford's style is lucid, elegant, and always adapted to his subject. He is a master of the art of narration, though by no means of the art of construction. And his power and his lack of power are plainly manifested in *Paul Patoff*. The young diplomatist, the son of an English mother who hates him, is a strong and real character; "the moral sufferings of his childhood had killed the natural affections in him, and there had remained nothing in their stead but a strong sense of duty to his nearest relations." Madame Patoff's love is wrapped up in her son Alexander, an effeminate dandy. She has always preferred Alexander to Paul. And so strong becomes her dislike to the latter that, being a fixed idea constantly dwelt upon by a morbid mind, it leads her to attempt to kill the son she hates. Mr. Crawford's wonderful descriptions of life in Constantinople—the Mohammedan celebration in the cathedral of Santa Sophia, the scenes in the Bazaar, the death of the Turkish lady—almost make us forget the repulsiveness of the subject. The effect of maternal dislike on a character so well balanced as that of Paul Patoff has been carefully studied, it is true. But all Mr. Crawford's skill cannot make the reader accept Madame Patoff's condition of mind as anything but monstrously impossible. A mother could prefer one son to another, but the mother who could twice attempt to kill the son she disliked exists only in fiction.

Alexander Patoff and his brother visit the mosque of Santa Sophia on the last night of the feast of Ramadan. Alexander had insulted a Turkish woman during the day and caused his brother much anxiety, as Paul was an *attaché* of legation and he feared that his career might be injured by his brother's indiscretion. During

the ceremonies Alexander disappears. It would be certain death for a Frank, particularly a Russian, to venture among the fanatics in the body of the mosque, or even into the street. Paul and his attendant only know that he has disappeared. Alexander and all traces of him are lost. Madame Patoff assumes at once that the son she hates has killed the son she loves. When Paul, whose impassive nature has been touched by the vision of a sweet and womanly English girl, proposes to her, he is met with the spectre of his supposed crime. His mother assists in exciting the doubts of Hermione, the girl who has promised to marry him, and he goes away, vowing to bring his brother back or not to return himself. The adventures that follow are as exciting as any in the *Arabian Nights*. By means of the almost preternatural shrewdness of Balsamides Bey, Alexander is found in a cell where he has been kept for over a year. The Turkish lady whom he had affronted decoyed him to her palace, and, having played a practical joke on him, had kept him prisoner, being afraid either to kill or release him. Here the story ought to end, but Mr. Crawford tacks to it a kind of supplement. Alexander endeavors to induce Hermione to discard Paul; Hermione hesitates, and Madame Patoff, to help along Alexander in his suit, tries to murder her other son. Finally this obnoxious woman goes raving mad.

Alexander's cowardice and selfishness are made apparent to Hermione, and the usual marriage-bells ring. Mr. Griggs's speeches to the American "scientist" are particularly good. Professor Carver insists that Christians in arguing with "scientists" always fall back on faith and refuse to listen to reason. "When you can disprove our position," answers Mr. Griggs, "we will listen to your proof. But since the whole human race, as far as we can

ascertain, without any exception whatsoever, has believed always in the survival of the soul after death, allow me to say that when you deny the existence of the soul the *onus probandi* lies with you, and not with us."

Anstey: "Fallen Idol."

Mr. Anstey's *Fallen Idol* (Philadelphia: Lippincott & Co.) is cleverer than *A Tinted Venus* and *The Giant's Robe*, and it approaches the inimitable *Vice Versa*. It is a very funny burlesque on the craze for Buddhism lately developed in the society of the cultured. It is of the same class as Mr. Frank Stockton's delightful extravaganza, *The Casting Away of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine* (The Century Co.) It is difficult to characterize the quality of humor which Mr. Stockton diffuses through this story of two good housewives wrecked in company with a young man whom they take under their protection. Mr. Frank Stockton is more of an artist than Mr. Anstey, and has more "staying power." The strict honesty and "capability" of the two women from the Middle States, who in the most extravagant situations are entirely true to life, are drawn by a humorist who has all the delicacy of Mr. Howells and the brilliancy, without the vulgarity and cynicism, of M. Edmond About. Mr. Stockton's humor is a great advance on that of Orpheus C. Kerr and Petroleum V. Nasby. It is indicative of the improved taste of the American people.

The late Miss Alcott: "Jo's Boys."

Miss Alcott's *Jo's Boys* (Boston: Roberts Bros.) is the last of the series of young-folk books beginning with *Little Women*. And the older folk, too, will take leave of them with regret. Lingering over the pleasant pages, we too are moved with regret that no Catholic writer has yet

given us a book or series of books for young people that will compare in attractiveness of manner and knowledge of human nature with Miss Alcott's books. Why should the best of our children's books not be founded on a deeper and truer philosophy than that of Emerson? Why should not the beauty of Catholic life be shown through the most powerful of all mediums—the stories loved of the young? We are young during the greater part of our lives, and we return again to our childhood when we grow old.

Picard: "Old Boniface."

Old Boniface: A Novel (New York: White, Stokes & Allen) is by Mr. George H. Picard, author of *A Mission Flower*, which was a remarkable American novel. *Old Boniface* is an "international" story. It has no merit whatever, except an easy style.

Wharton: "Hannibal of New York."

Mr. Thomas Wharton, author of *A Latter-Day Saint*, has written *Hannibal of New York* (Henry Holt & Co.) It is a hard, coarse caricature of life. The personages are newly rich millionaires, so vulgar and heartless that nobody can be benefited by making their acquaintance. They are not even amusing. There is some force in the picture of the wife of the millionaire deprived of every dollar as a punishment, but her sufferings are not edifying. One of the strongest pleas for idealism in modern literature is the existence of would-be realistic books like *Hannibal of New York*.

Mrs. Whitney: "Bonnyborough."

Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney's *Bonnyborough* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is a worthy successor to *The Wide, Wide*

World and other "talky" books, in which the characters made muffins, invented new readings of Bible texts injected into New England slang, and were generally harmless idiots with a mania. "Peace Polly" is the name of the heroine of *Bonnyborough.* A vein of pleasantry is introduced into the commonplace life of this young person by the twisting of her name into "pease porridge." This bit of humor vivifies a good many dreary pages of the four hundred which make up *Bonnyborough.* Mrs. Whitney loses no opportunity to hit those city people who are supposed to astound country people in the summer by their superior *savoir faire.* She tells with gusto of a picnic to which the "country boarders" were not invited: "The ladies with country toilets carefully suggestive of metropolitan art and resource, and the young men with the water-cart whiskers and successful British intonations, took their turn at standing about or sitting on piazzas, to see the equipment and start of the simple, and to stare, as the simple had been supposed to have stared—only they never did—at themselves." But in spite of the queer theology of the book, the twisted applications of Scripture that sometimes seem irreverent, there are signs of a desire to get nearer to the truth and of the conviction that without God and his grace the earth is "earthy."

Miss Jewett: "Marsh Rosemary."

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett is another New-Englander of the "Quietist" school. She has something of the tone of the charming Miss Mitford, whose *Our Village* and *Belford Regis* are classics. Her latest book is *The White Heron, and Other Stories* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) "Marsh Rosemary" is the most carefully written of the sketches that make up the book. It is on the same line as Tennyson's "Enoch Arden." An old maid marries a

young and lazy man. After a time he disappears; she mourns in silence, forgetting his bad qualities and glorifying his good ones. Suddenly, after a lapse of time, Mrs. Elton, a village gossip, brings news of the man whom Ann Floyd had believed to be dead:

"Ann was stitching busily upon the deacon's new coat, and looked up with a friendly smile as her guest came in, in spite of an instinctive shrug as she had seen her coming up the yard. The dislike of the poor souls for each other was deeper than their philosophy could reach."

It is remarkable that in most of these New England stories in which the life of the people is depicted with fidelity, religion assumes a hard and repellant aspect. The deacons, the farmers, the seamstresses—who seem to answer in social position to Miss Mitford's poor English gentlewomen—and even the minister, are in their professionally religious capacity unforgiving and obstinate. Ann, in "Marsh Rosemary," in her trouble is all the more pathetic because religion has no consolations for her. She finds that her husband has "married" another woman. She comes suddenly, unobserved, upon a domestic scene made up of the faithless Jerry, his wife, and the baby. She is pleased to hear that Jerry, who, the neighbors predicted, could come to no good, is thrifty and industrious; but then the sense of her woe and his treachery enters her heart:

"The other woman stood there looking at them, full of pride and love. She was young and trig and neat. She looked a brisk, efficient little creature. Perhaps Jerry would make something of himself now; he always had it in him. The tears were running down Ann's cheeks; the rain, too, had begun to fall. She stood there watching the little household sit down to supper, and noticed with eager envy how well cooked the food was and how hungrily the master of the house ate what was put before him. All thoughts of ending the new wife's sin and folly vanished away. She could not enter in and break another heart; hers was broken already, and it would not matter."

Now, Ann—or Nancy, as Miss Jewett prefers to call her—was a religious woman, according to her Congregational lights; but in this crisis, when it was a question of solving a social problem which she had no right to solve in a sentimental way, her religion offered her neither consolation nor direction. Jerry, evidently a bad and heartless man, was left to his sin, and his innocent partner to the consequence of it. He might desert his new wife as he had deserted his old one. But Nancy, who paid out of her scanty earnings her portion of the minister's salary and never missed meeting, takes no thought of her responsibility as accessory to her husband's crime. Miss Jewett's sketches are slight but artistic, and so true to life that, like Mrs. Terry Cook's *Sphynx's Children*, they have worth as material for the study of New England life. Gogol and Tolstoï, and others of the Russian novelists now so greatly in vogue, have this merit of fidelity. And in *St. John's Eve*, by Gogol (New York: Crowell & Co.), we find a clue to the present position of Russia among novels. In fact, novels are to-day doing what we formerly expected history to do—telling us the truth; we gain more knowledge of the character of the Russian people from the Russian realists than from all the cumbrous historical essays on the Cossacks and Peter the Great yet written.

Hamerton: "Golden Mediocrity."

Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton's books, *Thoughts about Art*, *The Intellectual Life*, and *A Painter's Camp in the Highlands*, are deservedly appreciated. It is no reflection on the supremely good taste he has always shown that he married a Frenchwoman. Madame Eugénie Hamerton is the author of *Golden Mediocrity* (Boston: Roberts Brothers), a novel which must have a healthy effect. It is subdued in tone, but in admirable taste.

The interest is gentle but well kept up. Madame Hamerton paints a French interior—not the kind of an interior which we usually see in French *feuilletons*, but the inside of a home. Madame Hamerton contrasts the frugal elegance of French housekeeping with the extravagance of the English—and also the American—methods. The French understand that elegance and "mediocrity" of income are not incompatible. In the case of the Marquis de Civray she has an example of the horrible results of the constant intermarriages in noble families. She treats it, not as a moralist, but as a sympathetic observer, and her narrative has the more force. The experience of the young French people when they feel for the first time the shock of English cookery is amusing. Hèléne ventures unsuspiciously to eat horse-radish, while her brother tries the Worcester sauce. "Immediately her temples and forehead were pearled with tiny drops of perspiration, which soon covered all her face to the roots of her hair, and, with a trembling, moist hand, she helped herself to a full tumbler of water, which she swallowed hurriedly." "It's one of the numerous sly devices of the English to astonish the foreigners," said Jean; "they choose our mouths as the proper place to explode their fireworks in."

The astonishment of Hélène's English friends on discovering that a marquis may be on terms of equality in France with a "simple college master and his daughter" is graphically depicted. The Marquis de Civray acknowledges the status of intellect and goodness, while the amiable English of the upper middle class can think of nothing but the condescension of rank.

But Madame Hamerton does not force her points; she writes with keen perception of lights and shades, but with none of that detestable "smartness" of style which we

have already noticed in Miss Marryat's vulgar book on America. Madame Hamerton's hero marries an English girl, who, however, is, like him, a Catholic. We have to thank Madame Hamerton—we understand that she does not like to be called "Mrs."—for a pure and interesting story, which will do much to dissipate American prejudice against the French people and to teach American mothers that riches and extravagance are not necessary to elegant and contented lives.

Macquoid: "Joan Wentworth."

Joan Wentworth (Harper & Bros.), by Katharine Macquoid, is a pleasant story of French school-life and Breton manners. It is probably an early work of Mrs. Macquoid.

Mallock: "The Old Order Changes."

A new novel from the pen of Mr. W. H. Mallock is sure to make a literary sensation and to be read eagerly by people who know the flavor of that author's previous books. *The Old Order Changes* is less a novel than a series of dialogues, managed with inimitable grace and exquisite knowledge of those minor traits of social human nature which make the highest comedy. Mr. Mallock's usual tendency to pruriency is not so evident in this work as in his preceding ones. There is, to be sure, a certain divorced Madame de St. Valery, who has an interest for the hero, Carew, and an American girl who "would have gone to her ruin with the same look in her eyes that most girls would have in going to their confirmation," yet much is not made of them. The conflict between Carew's passions, the object being this Miss Violet Capel, and his principles, which tend towards Miss Consuelo Burton, is sufficiently accentuated without any of that over-sensuous coloring which is as vulgar as the modern sculptor's habit

of chiselling the temptress who appears to St. Anthony with all possible power, and leaving out the expression of that will and grace which made the saint victorious. Some of Mr. Mallock's personages find Thackeray vulgar, and, from the unanimity of their opinion, it seems as if Mr. Mallock agrees with them. But Mr. Mallock, whose eye is very keen for marks of vulgarity, should avoid the trick of pretending to take portraits of living persons of celebrity and putting these weak sketches into his books. What, for instance, can be more vulgar than the use of "Mr. Herbert Spender" for Mr. Herbert Spencer? Mr. Mallock's creations are vivid and vital enough not to need the cheap arts of that most vulgar and meretricious of novelists, Lord Beaconsfield.

Consuelo Burton and her two aunts are Catholics of a very high English caste. The aunts are exceedingly devout; Consuelo, a great beauty and of a firm character, believes all the church teaches, but she has doubts whether the church can reach the poor in this century or not. Carew is reverently in search of truth, and also more or less in love with Consuelo. She thus expresses her feelings to him:

"The world is changing and the church stands apart from the change. . . . And what," she went on, with a sound like a stifled sob—"what has the Mass got to do with this? It might have so much, but at present it has nothing. It distracts us from our duty; it does not nerve us to follow it. What right have I to be listening to angels, when outside the chancel-wall are the groans of the crowded alley? Often, often, often, when I have heard the organ playing, 'Hang the organ!' I have thought; 'let me listen to the crying of the children.'"

Of one of her aunts Miss Consuelo says:

"When I watch her trotting off to Mass in the morning, looking as if she were doing the whole duty of woman, I feel as if, myself, I should never be religious again."

Nevertheless she is religious, and Carew, seeing her at her devotions, is astonished by the strange, unearthly brightness of her face. She listens to a dialogue between Mr. Stanley, a priest, and Foreman, a Socialist. The priest shows how absurd are pretensions to the improvement of the human race founded on the theory that all men are capable of the highest sacrifices. And, hearing the priest's presentment of the Christian answer to anti-religious Socialism, she ceases to doubt. Miss Consuelo Burton is an interesting character, but Mr. Mallock has not rightly interpreted what a well-instructed Catholic girl of high mind would say if she had a momentary fear that modern infidelity had made a gap between religion and the poor which the church would not bridge. Surely no thoughtful assistant at the unbloody Sacrifice could feel that appeals to the Lamb of God for mercy and peace are not as applicable to the poor as the Sacrifice itself is to the whole human race. Miss Consuelo Burton might have been afraid that the children of the church had failed to grasp her meaning, and to act towards the poor, stimulated by that meaning; but she would not—except in Mr. Mallock's book—talk about the church or the Mass "distracting us from our duty." The most sublime Sacrifice could not make those who understood it selfish or self-centred. The truth is that, in causing his heroine to talk this way, Mr. Mallock has thought too much of the gorgeous vestments and the music, and too little of the divine Fact of which they are only accessories. It is the way even of the most sympathetic non-Catholics.

The conversation between Mr. Stanley, the priest, and Mr. Foreman, the Agnostic Socialist, which converts Miss Consuelo, is very spirited—Mr. Mallock having recovered the art of talking in books, which seemed lost when Walter Savage Landor died.

"If we were all equally clever and equally industrious, your theory would be perfect. The state would be socialistic to-morrow. There is only one other supposition on which the same result would be possible—if the average race of men were all of them to rise to heights of zeal and self-sacrifice to which saints and heroes at present find it very hard to attain. Will Mr. Foreman allow me to ask one question more? The kind of life you contemplate in your Socialist state s one of enjoyment, comfort, cheerfulness, is it not? It does not, at all events, approach the gloom and the hard discipline of monastic orders? Exactly. I thought so. I have known other men of views similar to yours, and they have all declared that the asceticism of the Christian church is little less than a blasphemy against our healthy human nature."

Mr. Foreman agrees to this.

"You are doubtless aware," continues Mr. Stanley, "that this discipline in its severest form is regarded by the Catholic Church as fitted only for a small fraction of mankind. What I want to say to you is, that the severest discipline ever devised for any handful of monks does far less violence to our average human nature than the change in it which your system would require to be universal. It would be easier, far easier, to make men Trappists than Socialists."

The Old Order Changes has the brilliancy, the wit, the delightful play of humor—witness the encounters, so entirely well-bred, between the Tory Protestant, Lady Mangotsfield, and the Catholic, Lady Chiselhurst—and the soundness of reasoning, up to a certain point, that make the appearance of each of Mr. Mallock's books a striking feature in modern literature. We say a great deal when we say that it has all the best qualities of *The New Republic*, with only one defect—a plot which, while it does not make the dialogues and by-play more brilliant, gives a needless vagueness and weakness to the work. Mr. Mallock need not write a story in order to interest his readers; he possesses in a high degree the gift of enchaining attention by his charming style. Mr. Stanley preaches on the necessity of the church's taking humanity more

into consideration and her power of doing it. But it is no new thing for a priest of God's church to teach that the church holds within her what is good in all creeds—even in Socialism, and, above all, in what is called the religion of Humanity. Mr. Mallock, unlike Mr. Harrison, Miss Vernon Lee, and the others who prattle so complacently of "the choir invisible," reasons. The saddest thing in all the modern worship of the Goddess of Reason is the unreason of her worshippers

Lee: "Baldwin."

Miss Vernon Lee has a great many admirers. She is a lady of a Positivist turn of mind. She shows in her writings much familiarity with the nastiest works of fiction and poetry. She dwells on these with the tenderness peculiar to the new æsthetic school to which she belongs, and in her pages we are taught that Maupassant's *Une Vie*, Théophile Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, and Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal* are oft-recurring topics in the only circles where the highest philosophy is talked. It is rather hard to grasp this high philosophy as taught in *Baldwin: Being Dialogues on Views and Aspirations* (Boston: Roberts Bros.) It has such little body. Mr. Mallock's *New Republic* has doubtless given Vernon Lee—who prefers to pose as a man—the idea of the form of *Baldwin*, as Lander's *Imaginary Conversations* probably gave Mallock the idea of the *New Republic*. Mr. Mallock is bitten by the pruriency that disfigures Vernon Lee's writings, and one of the strongest chapters in *Is Life Worth Living?* is ruined by a quotation from the worst novel written in any language, which quotation in Mallock's book, taken with its context, becomes blasphemous.

If Mr. Mallock and Vernon Lee reflect the opinions of the English "high thinkers," we have reason to conclude

that the emancipation from all religious belief which Vernon Lee teaches us to believe to be the *nirvana* of the philosophical æsthete has led to a return to the most horrible forms of pagan vice. The most remarkable thing about Vernon Lee's writings, aside from the constant playing with thoughts forbidden to Christians, is the art by which so large a number of well-formed English sentences are made to cover so little real knowledge. She gives one the impression that she has dipped into hand-books and saturated herself with certain poetry and novels in which the use of art for art's sake is made an excuse for positive obscenity.

It is natural to conclude that a young woman who has written in a learned manner on the Renaissance—a large book on the Renaissance—should take the trouble to learn something of the Catholic Church. But she is evidently as ignorant of its theology and its philosophy as Mr. Frederic Harrison, who considers it unworthy of "philosophical consideration!"

Baldwin is in the shape of dialogues. Labored efforts are made to give individuality to the characters, and descriptions of nature are introduced and greatly elaborated. "The Responsibilities of Unbelief" is the first dialogue in the book. Vere, Rheinhardt, and Baldwin talk over the sermon of a Monsignor Russell, whom they have heard preach. They are all unbelievers. All of them have gotten over the "weakness" of believing in God. But Rheinhardt is the most advanced.

"Ladies," Rheinhardt says, "I admit, may require for their complete happiness to abandon their conscience occasionally into the hands of some saintly person; but do you mean to say that a man in possession of all his faculties, with plenty to do in the world, with a library of good books, some intelligent friends, a good digestion, and a good theatre when he has a mind to go there—do you mean to tell me that such a man can ever be troubled by wants of the soul?"

After Rheinhardt asks this question the author drops into one of those over-worked bits of description held by her admirers to be exceedingly vivid and graphic:

"Beyond the blush and gold (coppery and lilac and tawny tints united by the faint undergrowing green) of the seeding grasses and flowering rushes, was a patch of sunlit common-ground of pale, luminous brown, like that of a sunlit brook-bed, fretted and frosted with the gray and rustiness of moss and gorse, specks of green grass and tufts of purple heather merged in that permeating golden brown. The light seemed to emanate from the soil, and in it were visible, clear at many yards' distance, the delicate outlines of minute sprays and twigs, connected by a network of shining cob-webs, in which moved flies and bees diaphanous and luminous like the rest, and whose faint, all-overish hum seemed to carry out in sound the visible pattern of that sun-steeped piece of ground."

This is a good example of the manner in which some modern writers overlay words with words in the effort to imitate the effects of the paint-brush. Sir Walter Scott's and Cooper's manner of suggesting natural pictures have gone out of fashion, and in return we get this sort of thing. The talkers go on considering the responsibility of unbelief. Now, one of the most fascinating qualities of unbelief seems to most people its absence of responsibilities. But Baldwin tries to make it plain, taking for a text Monsignor Russell's zeal in preaching the faith, that unbelievers have resting on them the responsibility of propagating un-faith. Whom they are responsible to does not appear, and Rheinhardt voices the logical conclusion of the religion of humanity, to whom they all belong, when he says: "Upon my word, I don't know which is the greater plague, the old-fashioned nuisance called a soul or the new-fangled bore called mankind."

But Baldwin, who is a wretchedly hypocritical and "talky" prig, tries to convince Vere that he ought to destroy the religious belief of his wife and children:

"Do you consider this as complete union with another, this deliberate silence and indifference, this growing and changing and maturing of your own mind, while you see her mind cramped and maimed by beliefs which you have long cast behind you? This divorce of your minds, which I can understand only towards a mistress, a creature for whom your mind does not exist—how can you reconcile it to your idea of the love of a husband to a wife?"

Vere, in real life, would probably answer that a wife without religion would run the risk of becoming less of a mother and more of a mistress. But in Vernon Lee's hands he only says:

"I respect my wife's happiness, then, and my children's happiness; and for that reason I refrain from laying rough hands upon illusions which are part of that happiness. Accident has brought us into contact with what you and I call truth—I have been shorn of my belief; I am emancipated, free, superior—all things which a thorough rationalist is in the eyes of rationalists; but"—and Vere turned round upon Baldwin with a look of pity and bitterness—"I have not yet attained to the perfection of living a hypocrite, a sophist to myself, of daring to pretend to my own soul that this belief of ours, this truth, is not bitter and abominable, icy and arid to our hearts."

Nevertheless Baldwin goes on arguing on the responsibility of unbelievers to communicate the truth that there is no truth, until at the end Vere says: "But you see I love my children a great deal; and—well, I mean that I have not the heart to assume the responsibility of such a decision." "You shirk your responsibilities," answers Baldwin, "and in doing so you take upon yourself the heaviest responsibility of any."

All this is mere juggling with puppets and words. And if there is any evidence needed to show how inadequate this Positivism is for any useful or logical purpose, Vernon Lee's dialogues furnish it conclusively. Another dialogue, "The Consolations of Belief," is almost as sciocomic in effect as "The Responsibilities of Unbelief."

Baldwin talks at a young lady named Agnes Stuart, who has been a Christian. Finally "a strange melancholy, almost like a physical ache, came over Agatha." People who have followed Baldwin's limitless flow of talk will understand that this was the kind of ache that afflicted the hapless wedding-guest. "I think you are deserving of envy," answered Agnes coldly. "But I prefer to believe in the goodness of God." This is the most triumphant declaration of belief that Vernon Lee permits any of her puppets to utter. She cannot conceive of a Christian, strong and logical, because she is ignorant of the church, and because her studies of life and literature have been all on the surface. The arguments of these dialogues can unsettle no clear and well-instructed mind. But the allusions to nasty literature, similar to the allusions to nasty vices which made Vernon Lee's *Miss Brown* an indecent book, may help to make thoughts already corrupted more corrupt. Vernon Lee is regarded by a certain class of shallow thinkers and readers as a strong representative of high and refined philosophy and literature. Her work is a constant example of the truth that pretended belief in Neo-Paganism—we say "pretended," for it is plain that these infidels protest too much their disbelief in God —leads to the contemplation of the lowest objects under the most high-sounding names. Priapus looks well in a phrase of poetry; but it is a symbol of things which only the inhabitants of slums and dives dare utter in plain English to their fellows. And in this revival of "culture" we find the morals of Horace gilded in imitation of the gold of his phrases. Progress, with people like the teachers of Vernon Lee, means that we are to go back to the Augustan age, but with no hope that God will come as Christ to save the world.

Reid: "Miss Churchill."

Miss Churchill, by Christian Reid (New York: D. Appleton & Co.), is a pure and pleasant novel of mild interest, inferior to *Morton House* and *A Child of Mary*, but, nevertheless, of sufficient merit. *Lucy Crofton*, by Mrs. Oliphant (New York: Harper & Brothers), is a slight story, not in the author's best vein, yet also not without some delicate character-drawing.

Harte: "A Millionaire of Rough and Ready."

Bret Harte, like Homer, sometimes nods in telling his tales of the Argonauts. But in *A Millionaire of Rough and Ready* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Company) he is very wide awake. His crisp, firm, direct style is the best possible medium for the stories he has to tell. In *The Millionaire of Rough and Ready* Bret Harte effectively teaches the lesson that circumstances do not bring happiness, and, above all, that riches may bring worse evils than poverty. The story is a work of art, without the exaggeration that mars some of his other stories and without their false sentiment. A miner named Slinn finds gold at last. But, having tasted by anticipation the joys of wealth, he is stricken by paralysis. Alvin Mulrady comes to Los Gatos, where Slinn was blasted, with the secret of his discovery untold. Mulrady, instead of following the Georgeite theory of the surrounding population and squatting on the land, went to the owner, Don Ramon Alvarado, and offered to manage a farm "on shares." Don Ramon and his son, Don Cæsar, are drawn truthfully and delicately. Their high-breeding gives them even in poverty an incalculable superiority over their rich but vulgar neighbors.

"'They are savages,' said Don Ramon of the miners, 'who expect to reap where they have not sown; to take out of the earth

without returning anything to it but their precious carcasses; heathens who worship the mere stones they dig up.' 'And was there no Spaniard who ever dug gold?' asked Mulrady simply. 'Ah! there are Spaniards and Moors,' responded Don Ramon sententiously. 'Gold has been dug, and by caballeros; but no good ever came of it. There were Alvarados in Sonora, look you, who had mines of *silver*, and worked them with peons and mules, and lost their money—a gold-mine to work a silver one—like gentlemen! But this grubbing in the dirt with one's fingers, that a little gold may stick to them, is not for caballeros. And then one says nothing of the curse.' 'The curse!' echoed Mary Mulrady, with youthful feminine superstition. 'What is that?'

"'You know not, friend Mulrady, that when these lands were given to my ancestors by Charles V., the Bishop of Monterey laid a curse upon any who should desecrate them. Good! Let us see! Of the three Americans who founded yonder town one was shot, another died of fever—poisoned, you understand, by the soil—and the last got himself crazy of aguardiente. Even the scientifico who came here years ago and spied into the trees and the herbs—he was afterwards punished for his profanation, and died of an accident in other lands. But,' added Don Ramon, with grave courtesy, 'this touches not yourself. Through me *you* are of the soil.'"

Don Cæsar falls in love with "Mamie" Mulrady. And the pushing Mrs. Mulrady scarce hopes that the aristocrat will marry her daughter. But Alvin finds the mine that—apparently to the reader—belonged to the paralyzed Slinn. Mrs. Mulrady hurries her daughter away and gradually fits herself to lead in Californian society, and Don Cæsar grows small before the hope of a foreign prince.

Mrs. Mulrady's gradual evolution into that horrible being expressed by that horrible phrase, "society lady," is delightfully sketched:

"It occurred to her to utilize the softer accents of Don Cæsar in the pronunciation of their family name, and privately had 'Mulrade' take the place of Mulrady on her visiting-card. It might be Spanish,' she argued with her husband. 'Lawyer Cole says most American names are corrupted, and how do you know yours ain't?' Mul-

rady, who could not swear that his ancestors came from Ireland to the Carolinas in '98, was helpless to refute the assertion. But the terrible Nemesis of an un-Spanish, American provincial speech avenged the orthographical outrage at once. When Mrs. Mulrady began to be addressed orally, as well as by letter, as 'Mrs. Mulraid,' and when simple amatory effusions to her daughter rhymed with 'lovely maid,' she promptly restored the original vowel. But she fondly clung to the Spanish courtesy which transformed her husband's baptismal name, and usually spoke of him—in his absence—as 'Don Alvino.' But in the presence of his short, square figure, his orange tawny hair, his twinkling gray eyes and *retroussé* nose, even that dominant woman withheld his title. It was currently reported at Red Dog that a distinguished foreigner had one day approached Mulrady with the formula, 'I believe I have the honor of addressing Don Alvino Mulrady?' 'You kin bet your boots, stranger, that's me,' had returned that simple hidalgo."

The bishop's curse seems really to rest on the gold, the discovery of which brings misery to Slinn, and almost equal misery to Mulrady. They are rich at the end of the story—Slinn only for a moment before he dies. Bret Harte has given us one of his most charming and most true sketches of life, with a deep lesson. "Devil's Ford," the other story in the volume, is exaggerated but common place.

Haggard: "Jess."

Jess, by the author of *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, has only one good quality—a graphic picturing of life among the Boers, who, according to Mr. Haggard's account, have all the faults of the Pennsylvania Dutch without any redeeming virtues. We have to regret, too, an over-sensuousness which was characteristic of *She*, and which is a blot on so many English novels. It is remarkable that in most English novels the God of Christians is not mentioned. We have Fate and the "Unknowable." A series of novels by a great author, written on a sound

basis of Christianity, is much needed. As for the so-called "Catholic novel" that is constantly demanded, it would not be read by the people who cry out for it.

Black: "Sabina Zembra."

Mr. William Black's name recalls pleasant memories. Who can forget the delightful heroines of *A Daughter of Heth*, and *A Princess of Thule*, or the chivalric, weird, young, and unhappy hero of *MacLeod of Dare?* And therefore a new novel by a master of the art of fiction, to whom we owe so much pleasure, raises expectations of respite from "the cares that infest the day." *Sabina Zembra* is the new novel. Sabina is the daughter of Sir Anthony Zembra, a very great London magnate. Sir Anthony is rich and a personage in society. He objects to his eldest's daughter's going into a hospital and becoming a trained nurse. But Sabina prefers this mode of life; she objects to dinner-parties, flower-shows, dances, and the other laborious means by which people in society contrive to make life intolerable. Sir Anthony, therefore, asks her to leave his house, and he gives her a fair allowance. After this he, his second wife, and Sabina's step-sisters amuse themselves according to their way, and Sabina lives with some very nice, very poor, and very artistic people. Sir Anthony's governess continues to write accounts of his and his family's goings-in and comings-out for the "society" papers, and he inspires and enjoys them; but in public he is understood never to read these journals: he never sees them until "his attention is called to them!"

Sabina's state of mind is interesting. We almost hope in the beginning that she may become a real Sister of Charity instead of an experimental nurse. But this is soon dispelled by the appearance of a wounded bicycle-rider, whom Sabina forces Sir Anthony to keep in his house,

and whom she nurses. Mr. Black tells us that Sabina, working for the suffering, had "moments of exaltation." "She would sometimes repeat to herself, as with a kind of ineffable longing," the mystic stanza from Tennyson's "St. Agnes:"

> "Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
> Through all yon starlight keen,
> Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
> In raiment white and clean."

He thus describes her state of mind:

"But there was little time for self-communing during the continuous labor of the long day. Nor was she much given to pitying herself in any circumstances; it was the suffering of others that moved her, and here there was plenty of that, only too obvious, all around her. Moreover, she was a particularly healthy young woman, and she could bear fatigue better than any of her sister non-professionals, although when they got away to supper, about half-past eight or nine, and all of them pretty well fagged out with the day's work, they used to joke her about her sleepy disposition. It was rumored, moreover, that one or two of he medical students who came about had cast an eye on this pretty, tall, benignant-eyed nurse, who looked so neat and smart in her belted gown and apron and cap, and that they paid a good deal more attention to her than to the patient whose condition she had to report to the doctor. But Sabie was impervious to all that kind of thing. It was only when she was with the other nurses at night that the dimple in her cheek appeared, and that she showed herself—as long as her eyes would keep open—blithe and friendly and merry-hearted. Perhaps she was only a woman's woman, after all."

The appearance of the young bicycle-rider changes all this. Walter Lindsay, a chivalrous and generally admirable young artist, becomes a desperate admirer of Miss Zembra, after the manner of William Black's heroes. But William Black's heroes have now a certain old-fashioned flavor—a flavor of the æsthetic period that produced Oscar Wilde—and all old-fashioned things seem

unreal when introduced into modern life. In this way the period of Oscar Wilde is really more archaic than that of Queen Anne, because the latter is more in fashion than the former. Walter Lindsay, like most literary men and artists, is nothing of a Bohemian; Henri Murger would have found no pleasure in him. He is an intense young man, as eager to sacrifice everything he possesses to the lady of his thoughts as Ser Federigo was to kill his falcon. Nevertheless Sabina marries the bicycle-rider, and, instead of becoming the wife of a famous London artist with a studio in peacock-blue and gold, she sinks into an appendage to the thoroughly selfish bicycle-rider, Mr. Fred Foster. Sabina lacks the interest with which Mr. Black usually surrounds his heroines. In fact like Mr. Hardy and Mr. Blackmore, he has lost that peculiarity, delicacy, and indescribable quality which made him famous. Fred Foster's gradual descent from mere idleness to active criminality is well described. Sabina is forced to endure the amusements of her husband, whose diversions are those of the ordinary worthless young man about town. Her husband cannot understand her not being able to join in his delight in London music-halls, where even hereditary legislators have been known to disport themselves. Mr. Black gives several examples of the kind of gayety in which the patrons of these places delight. One can easily sympathize with Sabina's disgust as she sits in a box with two of her husband's male friends.

Sabina, high-spirited, high-minded, suffers as her husband falls lower and lower. We are moved by the fear that her husband may break her heart by claiming her child. But as a rule, though the novel is well conceived, Sabina does not excite that intense sympathy which she ought to excite. We must say of William Black, as we said of the author of *Springhaven* and *The Woodlanders*,

that he ought not to write another story until he can equal his best work.

Mitchell: "Roland Blake."

Dr. S. Weir Mitchell's *Roland Blake* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) opens with a spirited picture of army life during the late war. Dr. Mitchell has not so far received the appreciation he deserves as a novelist. Unlike most modern story-tellers, he has a story to tell, and he tells it with directness. For instance, in the first chapter the reader is put at once into the action of the story; and at once he gets the clue both to Roland Blake's manly and frank character and to that of the mercenary and treacherous evil genius of the book. Dr. Mitchell's scene is laid during the war, and the color of that time is vividly impressed on the reader's mind. This ability to show the spirit of an epoch and to make us live in it is an evidence of high artistic talent, if not of genius. The careful study of Octopia Darnell's love for her brother is a finer piece of analysis than one finds in Mr. James' or Mr. Howells' over-elaboration of the minor emotions that end a long way off in action. Octopia Darnell is a Southern woman living in New York on the bounty of an old lady. Her brother Richard is in the Confederate army. She believes him to be a patriot, while he is really a spy, selling Confederate secrets to the Northern army. She, loving nothing on earth except him and herself—but herself less—is willing to commit mean and even criminal actions for his sake; but when he proposes the very treachery she thought it possible for her to do, she starts back. She would have committed sin after sin for him, because she believed that he was incapable of a dishonorable act. When she discovers her brother's baseness, Dr. Mitchell tells, with keen insight, the condition of this wilful, contradictory, and yet not ignoble woman:

"If she only could have thrown herself on some good woman's breast and sobbed out her confession of regrets, remorses, and sorrowful disappointments, it would have been what she needed. There was no one she could seek, and her religion had been but a form, and was commonly put away, like a marker, between the leaves of her prayer-book. Why confession to another should be comforting is as yet one of the unanswered questions of the human heart."

It is one of Dr. Mitchell's best characteristics that he gives us the result of his study of human nature. He does not go through the contortions of analysis in public. He is not one of those literary gymnasts who lift light weights with many simulated muscular strainings. Evidences of thought and observation of mankind flash every now and then like brilliants from his pages. After the climax, when Olive, the very pleasant and unaffected heroine, and her betrothed show profound charity for the wretched Darnell, Dr. Mitchell says of Roland Blake: "A less ready and less finely made man would have caused cruel mischief. Men of practical capacity who are also imaginative are advantaged thereby: large ranges of the possible lie open to their reason, and the improbable is not set aside as foolish."

Roland Blake is an American novel, although the eagle is not made to scream, and neither apology nor defiance is assumed towards our English neighbors. The production of such works is what our literature needs, to save it from becoming hopelessly Anglicized or being deluged with snobbery.

Jeffries: "Amaryllis at the Fair."

Amaryllis at the Fair (Harper & Brothers) is a story by Richard Jeffries. The influence of the reading of American humorous writers is marked here—an unusual thing in an English novel. Mr. Jeffries tells of an untrained

girl living among coarse, selfish, and semi-pagan rustics. If there are many such people and country-places as Mr. Jeffries tells of in his blunt way, that country will, in no long time, need to be re-converted to the rudiments of Christianity.

Lyall: "Knight-Errant."

There can be no doubt as to the moral intention of Edna Lyall's books. It is good. In *Knight-Errant* (Harper & Bros.) we have a mixture of *Don Quixote* and *The Heir of Redclyffe*. The hero of *Knight-Errant* is the kind of man that good women would like all men to be, but whom even good men would find rather uncomfortable. Still, the world is better for such ideals as Edna Lyall holds up to it. They may be somewhat sentimental—in masculine eyes they may even appear somewhat unreal and a little absurd, as women's heroes in books generally do. But they prove the truth that women admire nobility of character in men, as they admire and honor purity among themselves. They are a rebuke to that cynicism which the *femmes-auteurs* encourage—the belief of the prince of cynics, that "every woman is at heart a rake." Carlo Donati, the "knight-errant," is the son of an Italian patriot—one of those Italian patriots one hears of, on whose dying face there had been that "look of faith in renunciation which was stamped upon the face of his teacher, Mazzini." That "look" is an old "property" with lady-novelists. It has been ascribed to Garibaldi, to Cavour, to the charming and beautiful Victor Emmanuel himself. It is a little worn; it ought to be put away with the "strawberry mark" of our ancestors. Miss Lyall wants the gentle Italian temperament for her hero, but she must make him a Protestant. This is the improbable manner in which she manages it:

"They lived all the year round at the Villa Bruno, and a kindly old priest at Pozzuoli taught the boy until he was old enough to go in every day to the *Ginnasio* at Naples. Here he entered into his life-long friendship with Enrico Ritter, and learned much through his intercourse with the German family, whose house became his headquarters when he was in Naples. The Ritters, deeming the country life dull for the boy, were constantly inviting him to stay with them, and giving him brief snatches of gayety. Nominally Lutherans, the worthy Germans were practically materialists, and it was largely owing to his visits at the Ritters' that Carlo first became dissatisfied with the religion in which his mother had educated him. Equally was he dissatisfied with the conventional acceptance of Christianity and the real scepticism which prevailed in the Ritter household. For a year or two he puzzled his brain over the vexed question; finally he took the decisive step and resolved to go no more to Church. This caused much pain to his mother and to his old friend, Father Cristoforo; and though plunging deeply into that sort of worship at the shrine of beautiful Nature which is the reaction from formalism, he felt a want in his life."

He meets an attractive English girl, and—

"After a time he formally joined the English Church. Of course he had some opposition to encounter, but though his old friend the priest shook his head sorrowfully, and though his mother shed tears, and though the Ritters chaffed him good-humoredly, his happiness was too great to be marred by such things; besides, they all loved him so well that they soon pardoned the obnoxious step which he had taken, and did their best to forget that he was not as they were."

And now Miss Lyall has cleared the deck. She could never have trusted a Catholic hero to be as good—and, in parenthesis, let us say as "goody"—as Donati becomes. Most Italians who know their Italy would look with contempt on one of their fellow-citizens joining the English Church without some solid material consideration; but Miss Lyall prefers to forget this. Anita, Carlo's sister, has married the manager of an opera troupe. Anita remains a Catholic, and is, therefore, liable to temptation. Her husband is a cross-grained person, and he is not

always polite to her, although she is his *prima donna.* Comerio, the first baritone, who is also a Catholic, and who has not had the advantage of a Mazzinian training, makes love off the stage to Anita. Carlo, therefore, gives up the legal profession, which he has studied, and adopts the dramatic profession, which he has not studied, and becomes first baritone, in order to prevent Comerio from making love to his sister on or off the stage. He makes a great success as Valentine in *Faust.* His rendering of Valentine's death-scene might well be adopted by some of the present Valentines. Of course it is impossible that Miss Lyall's hero could have bounded into success without hard work and long experience, and the young person moved to imitate Carlo's example will soon regret the experiment. Nevertheless, Miss Lyall's idea of how Valentine's death-scene should be done is good, and, carried out, would redeem a situation from the depths to which it is ordinarily dragged:

"Both the singing and the acting in the death-scene were exceptionally fine; the mingling of wrath and grief, denunciation and reproachful love, which he managed to convey in his last words with Marghérita, appealed to all, while at the end he produced a novel effect. With panting breath, and with more of sorrow than of anger, he sang, '*Tu morrai tra cenci vil.*' Then, suddenly diverted from the present, he pressed to his lips the cross on his sword-hilt which one of his fellow-soldiers held towards him, and afterwards, turning again towards Marghérita with a look so beautiful that once seen it could never be forgotten, sang with a depth of tenderness the brief 'I die for thee,' kissed her bowed head, with a sort of triumphant resignation gasped the last 'Like a soldier I die,' and fell back lifeless."

Carlo, singing and acting, follows Anita and her husband around the world, cutting out the wicked Comerio when he can. Anita grows weary of him, and it is no wonder. Why he could not have let her husband protect or brought

her to a sense of her duty by talking a little common sense to her does not appear. He suffers and makes sacrifices until Anita dies, singing a snatch from *Faust:*

> "*Oh, del ciel angeli* immortali!
> Deh, mi guidate con voi lassù."

This over, Carlo marries the attractive English girl who had "converted" him. Comerio, the wicked and vengeful, is disposed of. But one cannot help thinking that Carlo's exasperating Church-of-England goodness must have helped to disgust the wretched Comerio with that aspect of virtue. And, as he saw no other—being acquainted only with papistical Italians, who are notoriously wicked—he continued to go to the bad.

Crawford: "Saracinesca."

Mr. Isaacs, that curious Occidental-Oriental romance, gave Mr. F. Marion Crawford a celebrity which might easily have been evanescent had his first book, according to the rule, been his best. But his latest book is his best. *Saracinesca*—before alluded to in these articles, but now published for the first time in America—ought to have a phenomenal success. It has all the qualities of a good novel—dramatic action without exaggeration, natural play of character, truth to nature and experience, a full knowledge of life, and that artistic quality, or perhaps we might almost say that moral quality, that makes the reader feel safe in Mr. Crawford's hands. For instance, Corona, the stately Duchess of Astradente, is never for a moment untrue to the old duke with whom she has made a marriage of interest; although she knows that the young Prince Saracinesca loves her, she saves him and herself from what might have been ruin in every sense. Corona conquers temptation by prayer. The various shades of Roman politics are drawn by a sure hand. Mr. Crawford is

the first writer in the English language to present tableaux of modern Roman politics with decent impartiality and conservative decency. We have had enough of Italian *carbonari* aureoled in Liberal red fire. We have to thank Mr. Crawford for a new view of Roman society, but, above all, for a very great novel. The book has no nastiness in it. We have already given extracts showing its wonderfully vivid power of description and the author's just views of Roman society before the spoliation.

The Duke d'Astradente, the old and the young Princes Saracinesca, Valderno and Del Ferici, represent different political opinions. Del Ferici is an ultra-liberal, a treacherous conspirator, whom Cardinal Antonelli allows to remain in Rome because he fancies wrongly that such conspirators are harmless. Del Ferici and the younger Prince Saracinesca, who is a large landed proprietor, talk of the reforms we used to hear so much about. The prince meets Del Ferici's proposals on the subject of improving the Campagna with the assertion that things have changed since the Campagna was a series of villas. Del Ferici says: "Why are the conditions so different? I do not see. Here is the same undulating country, the same climate—"

"'And twice as much water,' interrupted Giovanni. 'You forget that the Campagna is very low, and that the rivers in it have risen very much. There are parts of ancient Rome now laid bare which lie below the present water-mark of the Tiber. If the city were built upon its old level much of it would be constantly flooded. The rivers have risen and have swamped the country. Do you think any amount of law or energy would drain this fever-stricken plain into the sea? I do not. Do you think that if I could be persuaded that the land could be improved into fertility, I would hesitate at any expenditure in my power to reclaim the miles of desert my father and I own here? The plain is a series of swamps and stone-quarries. In one place you find the rock below the surface, and it burns up in summer;

a hundred yards further you find a bog hundreds of feet deep which even in summer is never dry.'

"'But,' suggested Del Ferici, who listened patiently enough, 'supposing the government passed a law forcing all of you proprietors to plant trees and dig ditches, it would have some effect."

"'The law cannot force us to sacrifice men's lives. The Trappist monks at Tre Fontane are trying, and dying by the score. Do you think I or any other Roman would send peasants to such a place, or could induce them to go?'"

Later, Del Ferici, answering Saracinesca s statement that he does not see why an intelligent few should be ruled by an ignorant majority, says that the majority in Italy would be educated. Saracinesca asks whether schoolmasters make good governors.

"'The schoolmasters,' he says, 'would certainly have the advantage in education; do you mean to say they would make better or wiser electors than the same number of gentlemen who cannot name all the cities and rivers in Italy or translate a page of Latin without a mistake, but who understand the conditions of property by actual experience, as no schoolmaster can understand them? Education of the kind which is of any practical value in the government of a nation means the teaching of human motives of humanizing ideas, of some system whereby the majority of electors can distinguish the qualities of honesty and common sense in the candidate they wish to elect.'"

It is refreshing to find sane views of human conduct put into such a powerful form as this novel. *Saracinesca*, printed in *Blackwood's Magazine*, has been received enthusiastically in Great Britain. Mr. Crawford has well employed his great talent and his unimpeachable style in helping to strengthen the growing reaction against the mad policy of Continental theorists.

The figures in Mr. Crawford's comedy move with ease and naturalness. Corona is drawn with the breadth and nobleness of womanhood worthy of the author who painted

Diane in that other not so unobjectionable book, *To Leeward.* Mr. Crawford knows how magnificent are the effects of religion on characters naturally noble, and we see this in Corona. All the late books by celebrated writers of fiction have been disappointments. Mr. Crawford's *Saracinesca* alone is an exception. He has doubtless reached his acme in it. It would be impossible to go higher without getting abreast of Thackeray, Manzoni, and—with a difference in quality—Nathaniel Hawthorne at their best.

Two kind correspondents have favored the author with a warning and a suggestion. One warns him that it is dangerous to mention bad books. The other, a reverend gentleman, asks him to be careful to write about books that have an "immoral tendency under a specious appearance. Your notices of *Dr. Cupid* and a translation from Flaubert have helped me to advise some of my penitents who asked me whether those fashionable novels should be read."

The present writer is not addressing very young people. He believes that the time has arrived when Catholic American literature should begin to look beyond a narrow space walled by premium-books filled with goody-goody stories which no clever young person dreams of reading, and he desires to do something toward supplying a standard of judgment, moral and literary, which may be of use to those who run and read, and consequently suffer from that mental dyspepsia following the attempted assimilation of unwholesome and undigested food.

Montauban: "The Cruise of the Woman-Hater."

G. Montauban's *The Cruise of the Woman-Hater* (Boston: Ticknor & Co.) tells of a tiresome voyage during which a poor and amiable widow converted a cynical

hater of the female sex to that pity which is akin to love, and finally married him.

Collins; "Little Novels."

Wilkie Collins' *Little Novels* (London: Chatto & Windus) is a collection of ingenious stories, told with some of the marvellous skill that made the author of *The Woman in White* famous. Villainy is frustrated by devious ways, and a mind must be much preoccupied indeed that cannot for a time lose itself in Mr. Collins' ingenious combinations. Mr. Collins does not favor us with any wicked monk, and there is little of that coarseness which intrudes into several of his earlier stories.

Dostoieffsky: "Crime and its Punishment."

We must protest against the further introduction of Russian novels. *Crime and its Punishment*, by Theodor Dostoieffsky (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell), is one of the gloomiest of the gloomy works of a writer persistently puffed by certain critics. It is easy to understand that the Russians, oppressed and over-ridden by administrative power, liable at an hour's notice to be forced to Siberia, and in the grip of a government which, among a semi-barbarous people, has itself a difficult part to play, can be tempted to despair. This is the more easy to understand because the degradation of the Russian Church has left little that is elevating in the remnants of truth they have. One would think that some of these "great" Russian novelists—Tolstoï, Turgueneff, Dostoieffsky—would endeavor to raise the hearts of their people to better things, or, at least, to brighten their lives with those flashes of wit and humor which, in the darkest days of Ireland and Irish literature, have never been wanting to a people as horri-

bly oppressed as the Russians have ever been. But they do not. They paint life in its darkest and most revolting colors. This "masterpiece" of Dostoieffsky's is a book no careful mother could give to her daughters, no prudent father advise his son to read. There is no attractive description of vice in it; on the contrary, vice and virtue alike are presented with horrible grimness. The "saint" of the book is a girl called Sonia, whose father is a drunkard of the most besotted variety. Sonia adopts a vicious life to help her neglected brothers and sisters, who are pathetically represented by Dostoieffsky as living on the wages of her sin. Nevertheless, we are assured over and over again of Sonia's great purity of soul, and her piety under the circumstances is something to wonder at. The English edition of this book has been alluded to before. It is regrettable that there should be an American edition. What is the use of a literature, however realistic it pretends to be, which strikes no chord of hope, which paints humanity with its eyes to earth and without one ray of that divine light that makes the highest works of art joys for ever?

The hero of *Crime and its Punishment* is a student, Raskolnikoff, who has murdered an old woman for her money. He is pursued by remorse, and gradually this remorse undermines what sanity of body and mind he possesses. After a period of inward turmoil and outward fever he is sent to Siberia. Sonia follows him. Sonia, who in other days has talked to him of the raising of Lazarus, sees him returning to an affection for the New Testament. The book ends with the promise of another, in which the married life of this wretched creature and Sonia will be described.

"'Why,'" asks the murderer, Raskolnikoff, in one of his soliloquies, "'did that silly fellow Razoumikhin attack Socialists just now?

They are hard-working business-men. They work for "the common weal." I wish to live myself, otherwise it would be better not to exist at all. I have no desire to neglect a starving mother and clutch the money I have by me, on the pretext that on some day or other everybody will be happy. As some of them say, I contribute my stone towards the building up of universal happiness, and that must be enough to set my mind at ease. Hah! hah! Why, then, have you forgotten me? As I have but a certain time to live, I intend to have my share of happiness forthwith. After all, I am only so much atheistical vermin—nothing more. Yes, I am, *de facto*, so much vermin—first, from the fact that I am now considering whether I am so; secondly, because during a whole month I have been pestering Divine Providence, taking it to witness that I was contemplating this attempt, not with a view to material gains, but with ulterior purposes —hah! hah! Thirdly, because, in the act of doing, I was anxious to proceed with as much justice as possible. Amongst various kinds of vermin I selected the most noisome, and in destroying it I determined only to take just enough to give me a suitable start in life, neither more nor less.'"

After a few chapters of similar cogitations, and the constant iteration of the misery of everybody mentioned in the book, one feels as glad to get away from it as if one were creeping out of a noisome tunnel. Dostoyevsky's Russians are only gay when they are drunk, and then their drunkenness verges on madness and brutality. "Time-serving courtiers and apostate teachers," to repeat a phrase of Cardinal Manning's, have indeed left a heritage of woe on the lands they tore from the church. There seems to be no consolation for the Russian in his schism. If he casts aside the forms and ceremonies of his enslaved religion he becomes materialistic and superstitiously atheistical; if he accepts the New Testament he adapts the apparent and humanly-interpreted teaching of our Lord to his communistic theories. Count Tolstoï, for instance, pretends to imitate the earthly life of our Lord, literally accepting his precepts, but at the same time stopping with

earth. The Resurrection has no meaning for him, and he does not believe in the immortality of the soul.

Meredith: "Beauchamp's Career."

Mr. George Meredith is not a realist. He does not take crude material simply because it is at hand, and make use of it on the theory that one thing is as good as another to write about. He may be said to belong to the psychological school of fiction. He has the keenness of Mr. James or Mr. Howells, but he does not waste his powers of analysis on petty emotions. His English is Saxon and solid, with waving lights of Celtic wit playing over it. Mr. Meredith's novels are *caviare* to the general, because his strength lies in his style rather than in his fable. He has the directness of Charles Reade—to whom he is not without some superficial resemblance—with a delicacy of perception which Charles Reade did not possess. The people he describes are of the class in which Mr. Anthony Trollope delighted, but they have thoughts and aspirations beyond any Mr. Trollope ever credited them with. *Beauchamp's Career* (Boston: Roberts Bros.) is the story of a young Radical of aristocratic family, who goes through the ordinary routine of a young English aristocrat. It must be admitted that, as clever and keen as Mr. Meredith is, his people interest us less than his manner of telling about them. He is a scholar, and possessed of a style which flashes with as many jewel-like points as an essay of Montaigne's. Nevertheless, Beauchamp seems to be a great deal of a fool, as is usual with the heroes of novels. He falls in love with a French girl, Renée, whose elegant and refined Legitimist friends are described with true understanding. He almost marries her; then he meets an English maiden; he almost marries her. Finally he marries the third English girl, protesting against having

any religious ceremony. After this he is drowned in saving a boy's life. There is a fine touch when his uncle, Lord Romney, searches for the body:

"A torch lit up Lord Romney's face as he stepped ashore. 'The flood has played us a trick,' he said. 'We want more drags, or with the next ebb the body may be lost for days in this infernal water.' The mother of the rescued boy sobbed: 'O my lord! my lord!' and dropped on her knees.

"'What's this?' the earl said, drawing his hand away from the woman's clutch at it. 'She's the mother, my lord,' several explained.

"'Mother of what?'

"'My boy!' the woman cried, and dragged the urchin to Lord Romney's feet, cleaning her boy's face with her apron.

"All the lights in the ring were turned on the head of the boy. Dr. Shrapnel's eyes and Lord Romney's fell on the abashed little creature. The boy struck out both arms to get his fists against his eyelids.

"'This is what we have in exchange for Beauchamp!'

"It was not uttered, but it was visible in the blank stare at one another of the two men who loved Beauchamp, after they had examined the insignificant bit of mud-bank life remaining in this world in place of him."

Meredith's novels have increased in popularity of late, and to admire or not to admire Meredith is as great a test of cultivation in some circles as admiration of Browning is in others. There are situations in his books to be praised rather from the point of view of dramatic art than from the important one of strict morality. Renée's flight from her husband, and her taking refuge with Beauchamp because her husband, the old marquis, had insulted her by "loving her," is neither moral nor reasonable, though Mr. Meredith seems to think that she deserves the sympathy of the reader. The proprieties are saved by the earl's housekeeper's assuming to be his wife, and taking the afflicted marquise under her wing until her husband claims her.

"Strange Adventures of Dr. Quies."

The Strange Adventures of Dr. Quies, translated from the French by John Lillie and Mrs. Cashel Hoey (New York: Harper & Bros.), is one of those impossible but entirely delightful stories which one often finds in French, with very quaint pictures. Dr. Quies is a "scientist," one of the laziest and fattest of men, hating travel, yet obliged by the malice of another "scientist" to "move on" like the unhappy Jo in *Bleak House*. It is pleasant and amusing, conceived and carried out in the spirit of the archest humor.

Braddon: "Like and Unlike."
Warden: "Scheherezade."

Two English reprinted novels are Miss Braddon's *Like and Unlike* and Miss Florence Warden's *Scheherezade*. *Like and Unlike* is a story of adultery. It purports to be a description of the manners and customs of good English society. In spite of the luxurious surroundings of most of the personages in it, they are very ill-bred people. They take tea and they break the Sixth Commandment, and Miss Braddon's verbiage cannot conceal the dreadful vulgarity. "Since France has become a republic every thing new has been detestable," Lady Treducey says in this book, "and England is very little better than a republic. All our fashions have an American taint. The day is fast coming when London and Paris will be only suburbs of New York." If reprints of English novels continue to flood us New York will soon be only a suburb of London. But let us pray that an international copyright law may give American writers a chance to drive much of this nasty literature out of the market. The sort of heroine Miss Braddon introduces to young ladies is thus described: "She could still hold up her head and say to

herself, 'I may be passionately in love with St. Anstell, as he is with me; but I am true to my husband all the same.'"

Scheherezade is by the author of the popular *House in the Marsh*, which was a bold attempt to imitate Charlotte Brontë's manner and matter—not excluding the hatred of priests that showed particularly in *Villette*. Nouna, the heroine of *Scheherezade*, is a kittenish and disagreeable creature, without either sense, sentiment, or any other attribute that a woman ought to possess. She developes, by means of lurid and terrible incidents, into something resembling a woman. Nouna's father is a major in the English army, who has married a second wife while his first is living. Her mother is a female of infamous reputation; she is without religion, although the Catholic Church attracts her because she thinks she would find relief in confession. Her husband, a truly idiotic young officer, says:

"'You would never do for a Catholic, Nouna. They have to confess all their sins, even very little ones that you think nothing of.' 'Well, that's what you are always wanting me to do.' 'See, then. You shall go to Mass every Sunday, and then confess your sins to me, and you will be the very best of Catholics.'

"'But, George, George,' she began, almost in a whisper, holding his arm tighter, and looking away over the Place de la Concorde, which they were now crossing, to the trees of the Tuileries, 'there are some things—not sins—that one doesn't like to tell—I don't know why—but they make one think of so many things—that all seem new—and make one feel like a different person. I suppose a man never feels like that, but I am a woman—quite a woman—now, George.'"

Nouna probably regarded the confessional as a place where she could gossip with impunity; if George had not been so utterly foolish he might have let his wife learn something further about the church. There is just enough nature in this book to make its impossibilities interesting.

It is a wild and fantastic narrative, and the people in it are generally such as any decent man or woman would avoid in real life. It is almost as long as the new German novel, *Was will das Werden?* by Spielhagen, which, we warn our readers in advance of its translation and publication, is as dull as it is long. It is a pretended effort to give a remedy for the social ills that are crying aloud for redress. It has as little bearing on the society of to-day as *Wilhelm Meister* had. After many pages Spielhagen coolly ends by saying that if we see what we will see, "something grand" will happen! The mountain has labored and the mouse is very, very small.

Howard: "Tony the Maid."

Tony the Maid, by Blanche Willis Howard, author of *One Summer*, *Guenn*, etc. (New York: Harper & Bros.), is a pleasant contrast to the English reprints. There is a smile in every page of it. Tony is a young German girl who devotes herself to the service of Miss Aurelia Vanderpool. Miss Aurelia is a rather weak-minded American lady of a certain age. She has been travelling under the protection of her uncle John. This personage deserts her and goes his own way as soon as he finds the trustworthy Tony, whose real name is Antonina Tchorcher. Tony devotes herself, in the most artfully artless way, to the aggrandizement and comfort of Miss Vanderpool. She has all the best possibilities of a Becky Sharp, without any of her evil characteristics. The exclusive English at the hotel at Constance put the unconscious Miss Vanderpool under the impression that she is a great personage. Tony's only intention is to make her mistress comfortable. She captures the butler of the High-Dudgeons, the great potentate, by her adroit insinuations that Miss Vanderpool is of the highest social rank:

"Momentary opposition only made Tony's claims surer and safer. A transient and light-minded Frenchman, answering to the name of the Baron"—this was at the servants' table—"and wearing an insolent little imperial, suddenly appeared in that sedate and select circle down-stairs where Britannic ideas prevailed. Turning towards Tony, before the whole assemblage, he remarked superciliously: 'Vanderpool? The name is not in the *Almanach de Gotha*. We never travel without one, and I looked.' Not one of the honored names represented at that convivial board happened to adorn the Gotha almanac. The more reason why every eye should now glare accusingly at Tony. 'A gentleman of your education, Baron,' she replied, with the composure of an easy conscience, 'is undoubtedly aware that we have a different almanac in America. We, too, always travel with ours, and our name is in it.' This was strictly true. Tony had seen Miss Aurelia repeatedly take from her portfolio a yellow pamphlet, upon whose fly-leaf Aurelia Vanderpool was written in lead-pencil, and upon whose back 'Ayer's Cherry Pectoral' shone out in commanding characters. 'Of course,' coughed the Baron, 'America is a great country.'

Miss Vanderpool, thanks to Tony's harmless manœuvres, takes her place in the very centre of the British fort of High-Dudgeon's exclusiveness. Her reputation as an heiress and celebrity becomes great:

"An enchantingly pretty American girl of seventeen, whose mamma was a candidate for the outer chair of the next to the High-Dudgeon group, had the temerity to peep in to get a glimpse of the phenomenon! She was, for various reasons, not in favor at court, and the ambitious mamma, fearing the downfall of her schemes, reproved her daughter for so much as showing her saucy head within the precincts. 'Well, mamma, it wasn't worth while. She's homely enough, I must say.'

"'Jessie,' how often have I told you to say ugly! Homely, in that sense, isn't English.'

"'Neither am I, thank goodness, and neither's Bob. But, mamma, why do they make so much fuss over her? She's mild as a lamb, but not a bit smart, I guess.'

"'Clever.' corrected the much-tried mother, 'and "think," not 'guess.'"

Miss Vanderpool finds Sunday, under the strict rule of the English, unendurable. "And what have you done to-day, Tony? Have you enjoyed yourself?" Miss Vanderpool had been compelled to attend three English services, so she had reason for her wistfulness. "And how much!" exclaimed the girl. "First, I went to Mass, and then I arranged everything for the gracious fräulein, knowing my duty, and this afternoon, with gracious permission to go out, I enjoyed myself vastly. The garden was breezy and cool, the people so kind, the music beautiful. Then the sail over and back!" Miss Vanderpool hesitatingly asks Tony if she knows a place where there are no English. Tony answers that she knows where there are some nice Germans and French people, "so amiable, and of excellent family." Miss Vanderpool intimates that she has had enough of "family." Tony says that now and then an English-speaking person "might happen along." But Miss Vanderpool answers that she could endure that if she did not stay too long. Miss Howard's *Tony the Maid* is a good-natured satire on the manners of a certain class of English when on the Continent, and the motto, "*Ad bonam fidem recta omnis via*," refers to Tony, whose knowledge of her duty is rewarded by a happy emigration to America.

Tolstoi: "The Cossacks."

The Cossacks: a Tale of the Caucasus in 1852, by Count Leo Tolstoï, translated by Eugene Schuyler (New York: William S. Gottsberger), is the latest issued of this Russian novelist and philosopher's works. It was written in 1861. It is a sort of a pastoral of Cossack life. It bears the marks of truth, it is realistic—everything is put down—and the only idealism in the book is Olenin's attempt at self-sacrifice. Olenin is a young Russian officer, who,

longing for something beyond the gay and sophisticated life of a great city, exiles himself in a remote Cossack village. The people are rude, semi-barbarous; the stealing of horses is a mere imperfection; drunkennness is a virtue and chastity a matter of indifference. Still, they are devout in the Russian fashion. Olenin's friends of his own class look on female virtue as a commodity; he rises above this, and offers to marry a Cossack girl from pure love, although she is already engaged to Lukaska, one of the boldest of land buccaneers. But, though Marianka encourages his advances, she refuses to marry him when she hears that her lover has been injured while on one of his expeditions. He has suffered much during his struggles against his own inclinations and the laxity of his friends, and now he suffers more. But he says good-bye to Uncle Eroshka and the rest who have been part of his life. Going, "Olenin looked round once. Uncle Eroshka was talking with Marianka, evidently about his own affairs; and neither the old man nor the girl paid the slightest attention to him." *The Cossacks* ends in this way—hopelessly, disappointedly. While the descriptions of a wild, strange life are interesting—as interesting and as vigorous as in Gogol's *Taras Bulba*—yet it is hard to understand why Tolstoï's *Cossacks* should be vaunted as a masterpiece. In fact, it is hard to understand why Count Tolstoï's pessimism, affectation of realism, and general mistiness should be hailed with such effusion by the critics.

The novel-reading public ought by this time to be weary of Russians—the Russians depicted in the fashionable translations. Turguéneff, a master of style, was weakened in the estimation of some of the "cultured" by the fact that he wrote so much in French. Nevertheless he was the best of them. Then Tolstoï was introduced to us in an English dress, and people who found

Sir Walter Scott tiresome pretended to be enthusiastic over his interminable *War and Peace.* Now the leading man is Fedor Dostoieffsky, and not to know him well and his fellow-Russian, Lermontoff, a little is as fatal to the pretensions of the literary *fât* as not to know who Schopenhauer was a few months ago, or not to have an opinion on the *Nirvâna* is now.

Dostoieffsky is a realist—that is, he looks carefully for the gloomy, criminal, mean impulses and acts in life. He drags up the dregs of human nature and muddies his stream with them. The stream may be placid, limpid, or sparkling, and graceful shadows of green trees may pass over it; but Dostoieffsky never sees these things. Above all, he never sees anything that brings humanity nearer to God. God, if he exists, according to Dostoieffsky is a being who laughs at the inexpressible vileness of the man he has created vile: therefore he is a "realist;" he draws things as they are; he is Great, and Mr. Howells is his prophet! Dostoieffsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *Injury and Insult* are the two novels most talked about just now. In *Crime and Punishment* the interest eddies around a mad and lurid creature, Rodia Raskolnikoff, and in *Insult and Injury* Natash, a woman of brutal passion, is the central figure. Both novels are powerful and unhealthily interesting. If Russian life is what Turguéneff, Tolstoï, and Dostoieffsky represent it to be, Russia must be a sad place, whose people are divided between idiotic glee and unrestrainable delirium.

Laffan: "Ismay's Children."

Miss May Laffan, the author of *Hogan, M. P.*, *The Hon. Miss Ferard*, etc., is not a *persona grata* with Irish Nationalists. But she is a very clever writer—which is perhaps one of the reasons, for we do not like her way of

putting things. One is more likely to be offended by witty sneers than by stupid jeers. *Ismay's Children* (New York: Macmillan & Co.) is her best book. It has all the cleverness of *Hogan, M.P.*, without the cynicism and hardness—so strange in an Irishwoman—which spoiled that brilliant novel.

Ismay's children are Marion, Gertrude, and Godfrey Mauleverer. Their father was a wild Irish officer, who died leaving his affairs in such a tangle that the testimony as to his marriage with Ismay D'Arcy was lost. He told the name of the place in Scotland where the marriage took place to Ismay's aunt, Juliet D'Arcy, but the old lady, under the stress of terrible emotion, forgot it, and, when the children were left orphans, they were unable to make valid their claims to the estate they should have inherited. Brought up in France, they are Catholics. Old Miss D'Arcy and Father Paul Conroy are delightful pictures of an Irish gentleman and gentlewoman of the old school, which is unhappily rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Godfrey Mauleverer is not well defined; his involvement in a Fenian conspiracy and his death are *coups de théâtre*, for which Miss Laffan shows a weakness when her plot gives her trouble. Tighe O'Malley—who has possession of the estate which should belong to Godfrey—Lady Blanche, and the rest of the gentry are very stupid and uninteresting people, of whom no lesser novelist than Trollope could have made anything. But Miss D'Arcy, the Mauleverer girls, Father Conroy, the beggars, the Ahearnes, and the Quins are characters full of life and worthy of Gerald Griffin. The pretences of Peggy, professional beggar and professional letter-writer to Barrettstown, who, on the American mail day, begins to read a letter from Mrs. Kelly's daughter, beginning "My Dear Mother, this is all to tell you—" and, puzzled, cries out,

"She's ded!" are characteristically humorous. The system of marriage-making among Irish farmers is explained without exaggeration. Mary Ahearne wants to enter a convent, but her parents insist on her marriage. She escapes the latter alternative with the help of Father Conroy. Miss Laffan, sketching the interior of Mary Ahearne's room, states a sad truth which is the cause of much of the disregard of the outward beauty of things which even the most sympathetic tourists have noticed in Ireland:

"On the chimney-piece was a statue of the Madonna, with candlesticks and vases at either side. Beyond this there was not an attempt even of the humblest kind at decoration, not a flower, though the garden held a spring crop of blossoms. And it was not that Mary Ahearne did not love flowers; it was her secret wish on entering the convent to be given the charge of the green house, where the nuns grew the flowers for the altar. But she did not attempt to grow flowers or decorate the farm-house. This was because she shared the same feeling of unrest and insecurity that hindered her father from imitating the Scotch farmer's pretty garden and tidy approach. Old Ahearne never drove past McNeil's farm without stopping to admire the roses and the creepers trained on the house-front, and the pretty, bright flower-beds in the grass before it, yet he never dared to imitate McNeil's example. *Some one would be attracted by it, and bid over his head for the lease of the farm, as had been the case with the Scotchman.*"

Miss Laffan sees and acknowledges the fact that in Ireland, among the middle-classes, the convents have kept "alive the graces and decencies of life" which oppression made penal. Another instance of the love of the Irish poor for the beautiful things they seldom see is shown when Molly comes to see Marion Mauleverer:

"She never saw a flower save at Mass. Her own house, a cabin on the bog edge, had a manure-heap before its one window, and the approach to the door lay through a pool of liquid filth. The same kind of feeling came over her again, only not so intense, that she felt at High Mass on Easter Sunday or Corpus Christi—a sense of rest,

of peace, almost amounting to joy. The purple wrappings that symbolized suffering and travail were gone, and in their place were flowers, lights, incense, music. A foreshadowing of heaven, if only a transient one, was vouchsafed to her grateful eyes."

But neither Molly nor the other poor of Barrettstown could leave their hunger outside the church-door. It was always with them, though in church they forgot it.

One of the charms of *Ismay's Children* is the tender and careful treatment of the atmosphere around the young Mauleverer girls: Miss Laffan never lets us forget that their poverty only serves to make their unconscious refinement more apparent.

Ebers: "The Bride of the Nile."

Paula, the heroine of *The Bride of the Nile*, is one of the most forceful characters depicted in recent fiction. She has all the spirit of Sir Walter Scott's Catherine Seton without her pertness—a stanch and honest heroine, who never disappoints the reader by falling below her level. She cannot brook injustice; she cannot remain silent when wrong is made to appear right. And, as deeply as she loves Orion, her love does not blind her to those qualities in him which she hates with the same hatred as she hates the devil.

We praise George Ebers' romances with a reservation; but *The Bride of the Nile* is the best, the purest, and the most powerful of them. According to expectation, he admires the Moslems; his sympathy seems to tend more towards the crescent than the cross, and man himself is represented as the one source from which goodness comes, for Ebers is a humanitarian. Nevertheless these blemishes are not prominent; and Paula never could have been as she was, pure and noble, had the spirit of Christianity not directed her.

Blackmore: "Springhaven."

The author of *Lorna Doone* gives the public *Springhaven* (Harper & Bros.) The pernicious English practice of forcing novels into three volumes is doubtless responsible for the length of *Springhaven*, which is very long. Mr. Blackmore introduces us to a fine old Admiral, his two daughters, Faith and Dolly, several male characters, including Lord Nelson, Napoleon, and a French spy named Carne. The seafaring people in the book are all rough, true, and natural. The scene is laid in the early part of this century, and the pages of description have a faint scent of an old-fashioned *pot-pourri;* but, in spite of Faith's goodness, of which the author talks continually, Dolly's coquetry, Carne's heartless intriguing, the talk of the seafaring-men, and even Erle Twemlow's African adventures—during which a beard is made to grow on his face by means of a gold-colored powder, the roots of which are so thick as to deflect the course of a bullet—*Springhaven* is hard to read. It ends happily for everybody except the Admiral and the villain. Cheeseman, the smuggling and treacherous grocer, is very well done. Under fear of impending misfortune he tries to hang himself.

"'Why don't you cut him down, you old fools,' cried the Admiral to three gaffers, who stood moralizing, while Mrs. Cheeseman sat upon a barrel, sobbing heavily, with both hands spread to conceal the sad sight.

"'We was afraid of hurting of him,' said the quickest-witted of the gaffers; 'Us wanted to know why 'a doed it,' said the deepest; and, 'The will of the Lord must be done,' said the wisest.

"After fumbling in vain for his knife, and looking round, the Admiral ran back into the shop, and caught up the sharp steel blade with which the victim of a troubled mind had often unsold a sold ounce in the days of happy commerce. In a moment the Admiral had the poor church-warden in his sturdy arms, and with a sailor's skill had unknotted the choking noose, and was shouting for brandy, as he kept the blue head from falling back.

When a little of the finest *eau de vie* that ever was smuggled had been administered, the patient rallied, and, becoming comparatively cheerful, was enabled to explain that 'it was all a mistake altogether.' This removed all misunderstanding; but Rector Twemlow, arriving too late for anything but exhortation, asked a little too sternly —as everybody felt—under what influence of the Evil One Cheeseman had committed that mistake. The reply was worthy of an enterprising tradesman, and brought him such orders from a score of miles around that the resources of the establishment could only book them.

"'Sir,' he said, looking at the parson sadly, with his right hand laid upon his heart, which was feeble, and his left hand intimating that his neck was sore, 'if anything has happened that had better not have been, it must have been by reason of the weight I give, and the value such a deal above the prices.'"

Mr. Blackmore's style of telling his story is rich and mellow. But when he told *Lorna Doone* he left himself no other story to tell.

James: "Princess Casamassima."

Mr. James' *Princess Casamassima* is the best thing he has done, if we leave out his short stories. It does not end at all, though the hero commits suicide. The princess, a beautiful young person, is the wife of an Italian. She is exceedingly restless; she deserts her husband, an honorable, simple-minded nobleman, and comes to London to get as close as possible to the "lower classes." She has no principle, no constancy, no morality; but she is clever and interesting. Hyacinth Robinson, whose unknown father was believed to be a lord, and whose mother was a murderess, is investigated as a member of the "lower classes." He is a type, perhaps somewhat too refined, of the state of mind to which unsuitable education and impossible aspirations, joined with a taste for luxury, bring a great class of young men. He is singular only in having skilled hands and in using them as a work-

ingman in love with his work. He is led by the princess into loving her. He and she are both entangled in secret societies—she to amuse herself, he because he has been drawn into them. He has sworn to commit an assassination, and, when the time comes, he, left without hope or object in the world, assassinates himself.

The studies of the Socialists, Paul Muniment—who sees his way to power through destruction or a threat of destruction—the Germans, and Eustache Poupin, the French Communist, are exquisitely careful and true. When Hyacinth is suspected of cooling in "the cause," Poupin, a workman of fine words, tells him that it is between him and his conscience. The Communist says:

"'The conscience of the individual is absolute, except, of course, in those classes in which, from the very nature of the infamies on which they are founded, no conscience can exist. Speak to me, however, of my Paris; *she* is always divine,' Poupin went on. But he showed signs of irritation when Hyacinth began to praise to him the magnificent creations of the arch-fiend of December. In the presence of this picture he was in a terrible dilemma; he was gratified as a Parisian and a patriot, but he was disconcerted as a lover of liberty; it cost him a pang to admit that anything in the sacred city was defective, yet he saw still less his way to concede that it could owe any charm to the perjured monster of the Second Empire, or even to the hypocritical, mendacious republicanism of the *régime* before which the sacred Commune had gone down in blood and fire. 'Ah! yes, it's very fine, no doubt,' he remarked at last; 'but it will be still finer when it's ours!'—a speech which caused Hyacinth to turn back to his work with a slight feeling of sickness. Everywhere, everywhere he saw the ulcer of envy—the passion of party which hung together for the purpose of despoiling another to its advantage. In old Eustache, one of the 'pure,' this was particularly sad."

Mr. James' affectations, so obnoxious in his international books and so tiresome in *The Bostonians*, are not apparent in the *Princess Casimassima*. The novel has no story; but the play of character on character is direct,

and there is little tiresome analysis. The prince and Madame Grandoni, the honest German lady with the Italian name, are genially painted, and are as true to their national natures as Thackeray's De Florac. It is regrettable that Mr. James should prefer realism to idealization and offer us only a finely-limned panorama with all the apparent indifference of a showman who disdains even to introduce into his exposition one ideal sentence or one line of poetry. The tone of the book is that of a mind that sees the present without caring for the past or the future—a tone of doubt so settled that it does not care to ask even Pilate's question.

Yonge: "A Modern Telemachus."

A Modern Telemachus (New York: Macmillan & Co.) is a new story by Miss Charlotte M. Yonge, who, the older she grows, seems to be losing that fierce dislike to the Catholic Church that marked her earlier historical romances. A recent one, *The Armorer's Apprentices*, was exceedingly sweet and elevating, and did justice to the character of Sir Thomas More.

Shorthouse: "Sir Perceval."

Sir Perceval (New York: Macmillan & Co.) is a Quietist rhapsody by Mr. Shorthouse, the author of *John Inglesant*. There is a young lady in it, remotely connected with Port Royal in some manner, as everybody in the book seems to be. She delivers herself in this modest way:

"'I suppose,' she said, 'that mankind will always find some incentive to moral action in symbols. So long as the Christian faith is admitted to consist of mere symbols, I do not know—I really do not know—that I should object to it much. Some of its shadow music is beautiful—quite beautiful. But when these shadows are imposed on us as realities, then it becomes the highest duty of us all to show

that these dogmatic idols have no greater value than the productions of men's hands—the stocks and stones which they have replaced.'"

Into *Sir Perceval*, too, the questions of Positivism and Socialism enter, but no answer is made to them. The Positivist girl with Socialist tendencies dies.

"'She is gone,' I said, 'to that God whom she loved when a child. She is gone to that God whom she died serving, though she fancied that she did not know him.'"

One can scarcely blame her for refusing to accept the shadow of a religion which Mr. Shorthouse's personages offer her—a religion beginning and ending with the right of each person to read the Bible from his point of view. However, Mr. Shorthouse's Quietistic religion, though a vague and uncertain heresy, is better than no religion at all. Most of the novels that fall into our hands remind us of a speech in one of M. Augier's plays. A marquise says: "I was surprised even to-day by a shameful temptation. Where shall I find help? Who will save me?" To which an old marquis replies: "*In my time we had God.*"

In our time and in the literature of fiction God has gone out of fashion.

Jewett: "Deephaven."

Miss Sarah O. Jewett's *Deephaven* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is a series of quiet studies of life in a New England seaboard town. It has many charming bits of humor and tenderness; and the description of the old house at Deephaven is worthy of Hawthorne, with a touch of womanly sentiment. Among the contents of faded Miss Katharine's escritoire—

"There was a box which Kate was glad to find, for she had heard her mother wonder if some such things were not in existence. It held a crucifix and a mass-book and some rosaries, and Kate told me that

Miss Katharine's youngest and favorite brother had become a Roman Catholic while studying in Europe. It was a dreadful blow to the family; for in those days there could have been few deeper disgraces to the Brandon family than to have one of its sons go over to popery. Only Miss Katharine treated him with kindness, and after a time he disappeared without telling even her where he was going, and was only heard from indirectly once or twice afterward. It was a great grief to her. 'And mamma knows,' said Kate, 'that she always had a lingering hope of his return, for one of the last times she saw Aunt Katharine before she was ill she spoke of soon going to be with all the rest, and said, 'Though your Uncle Harry, dear'—and stopped and smiled sadly; 'you'll think me a very foolish old woman, but I never quite gave up thinking he might come home.'"

Anon.: "A Demi-god."

A Demi-god (Harper & Bros.), which bears the motto *Ετεχ Ἠτραδιων*, is an anonymous novel written on the supposition that a perfect man may be gradually "evolved" by several generations of careful selection of ancestors and fortunate circumstances. Probably this experiment will never be tested in real life until each individual succeeds in choosing his own ancestors. An English physician living in Amsterdam was several centuries ago smitten with the Dutch mania for the "evolution" of perfect tulips—a mania similar, and no doubt as expensive, as the fashionable mania for orchids. Hector Vyr was the result, in this century, of Dr. Vere's application of the theory of improving the race by artificial selection, suggested by the Dutch burghers' success with their tulips. An American group, consisting of the irascible Major Wellington, whose mildest oath was "Boswell's Life of Johnson!" his daughter Madeline, her Aunt Eliza and her lover, a Mr. Griffin, invade Greece. They are taken by brigands, who sneer at England and America, and defy their own timorous government. The captives, unable to raise the fifty thousand dollars demanded, are almost in

despa.., when Hector Vyr, the demi-god, arrives, puts the brigands to flight, and rescues the Americans.

The demi-god speaks English; he admires Miss Madeline and asks to look at her teeth—it is a tradition in his family to examine the teeth of ladies they admire. The teeth of the charming young Boston lady were probably false, as they were so perfect; but the author does not mention it, and Hector shows himself to be such a simple-minded demi-savage that Miss Wellington perhaps preferred that he should keep his illusion. The doctor's policy of selecting a handsome Greek barbarian shows its results in the intense stupidity of Hector, who is anything but a demi-god in mind. Of course he and Madeline—the first Bostonian to enter the Vyr family—are married, and modern and ancient Athens become one, as it were. The author stops here, unable, no doubt, to bear the dazzling future which must come to Greece from the marriage of this elaborately-cultivated demi-god and a Bostonian of the proper circle!

Haggard: "Allan Quatermain."

Mr. H. Rider Haggard still retains his place in the estimation of novel-readers. His latest book, *Allan Quatermain*, is dividing the honors with Bret Harte's *Cruise of the Excelsior*. A curious thing about *Allan Quatermain* (Harper & Bros.) is that it is dedicated to Mr. Haggard's sons, "in the hope" that it may help them "to reach to what, with Sir Henry Curtis, I hold to be the highest rank whereto we can attain—the state and dignity of English gentlemen." When we consider that the book is the record of the impossible adventures of a murderous savage, and that the end accomplished by Sir Henry Curtis is marriage with a barbaric princess of doubtful religion and morality, we wonder why the *Arabian Nights*

might not just as well be recommended to boys as a means of advancement towards English gentlemanhood.

Mr. Haggard's great hold on the public may be attributed to the boldness with which he takes old travellers' tales and changes them in the alembic of his imagination to things strange if not new, and, it must be confessed, to his use of the sensuous element. Mr. Haggard's characters are animal and unidealized—particularly the females who appear in his pages. In *Allan Quatermain* this element, particularly dangerous to young people, is more restricted than in *She*, but nevertheless is entirely too predominant. It is singular, too, that Mr. Haggard's knowledge of literature is so limited. He seemed to be ignorant of the existence of Moore's *Epicurean* when critics suggested that *She* resembled it; and in *Allan Quatermain* he anticipates captious remarks by saying that "there is an underground river in *Peter Wilkins*, but at the time of writing the foregoing pages" he had "not read that quaint but entertaining book." This effectually closes the critical mouths open to devour this author who takes "his own" wherever he finds it. His next book will probably be an account of life in a kingdom of African apes, when he will inform us in advance that he has never seen *Les Aventures de Polydore Marasquin*, by Léon Gozlan. *Allan Quatermain* justifies its motto, "*Ex Africa semper aliquid novi.*" It is full of wonders and of horrors. It has no literary merit. Neither *She* nor *King Solomon's Mines* nor *Allan Quatermain* will be remembered two years from this year of grace in which many thousand copies of them have been sold. Mr. Haggard's books are as full of impossible adventures as the novels of Alexandre Dumas, and in their sensuous flavor are—with the exception of *King Solomon's Mines*—even more pernicious.

Johnson: "The House of the Musician." Austin: "Friend Sorrow."

Two novels, *The House of the Musician*, by Virginia W. Johnson (Boston: Ticknor & Co.), and *Friend Sorrow*, by Mrs. Austin (New York: Catholic Publication Society Co.), have the same motive. In both, the usual detestable male creature who does not know his own mind falls in love with one sister, and then retumbles into love with the other. It is time that the writers of fiction discovered a new species of hero. One grows tired of the bold, bad, Rochester-like person, and also of the limp hero who would, in affairs of the heart, "be happy with either, were t'other dear charmer away."

Durand: "Count Xavier."

Madame Durand (Henri Gréville's) *Count Xavier* (Boston: Ticknor & Co.) has the false tone of all Henri Gréville's books. Love is, of course, the theme—that kind of love which absorbs morality, good manners, propriety, and everything reasonable. The characters are all Russians, and very uninteresting specimens of the subjects of the czar, without whom no modern novel seems to be complete. Count Xavier is handsome, and he is loved by a peasant girl. The peasant girl begins to pine away. He meets the illegitimate child of his uncle, called Thecla. Thecla begins to pine away too, when her mother, with more discretion than she had shown in her own youth, takes her from the castle that Count Xavier has inherited from his uncle. Count Xavier concludes to marry Thecla, and, after some complications, they are married. The discarded peasant girl changes her mind, does not pine away, and becomes nurse to the child of Count Xavier. What healthy-minded person wants to read a novel which has no prominent quality except sentimental

artificiality? The atmosphere of Henri Gréville's novels is like that of a close room impregnated with heavy and cheap perfumes.

Ouida: "A House Party." Broughton: "Dr. Cupid."

Two new novels by Ouida and Rhoda Broughton have been sent to us, announced with a great flourish. They are both evidences that unlimited audacity of language, aided by unrestrained imaginations, will not always pass for brilliancy. In fact, when a *femme-auteur*—as Louis Veuillot calls the class of writers of which Ouida and Rhoda Broughton are representative—begins to be slangy and immodest, she must become more so with each book she writes, in order to hold her public, until she merges into blasphemy and obscenity. Ouida, who has become a worn-out writing hack, has reached this last stage. *A House Party* (London: Hurst & Blackett) is a story of adultery. The scene is laid among English dukes and duchesses. The owners of an English country-house invite a number of aristocratic people there, that the Sixth Commandment may be broken with politeness. Ouida tells about this in a language invented by herself. The French would sneer at such a book—not because of its immorality, but because of its stupidity. *Dr. Cupid* (Philadelphia: Lippincott & Co.) is a story told wearisomely in the present tense. There is a country girl, whose vigorous arms, pet foxes, and flowers grow more and more tiresome. There is one of the creatures created by Rhoda Broughton, sensual and silly and slangy; and there is a vulgar married woman who enamels her complexion, and who is divided between love for her child and passion for a man who is not her husband. *A House Party* and *Dr. Cupid*, and all other books by their authors,

are signs of social decomposition, like phosphorescent lights over stagnant pools where slimy things breed and die.

Crawford: "Sarracinesca."
Howells: "The Minister's Charge; or, The Apprenticeship of Lemuel Barker."
Craddock: "In the Clouds."

Three notable novels are *Sarracinesca*, by F. Marion Crawford; *The Minister's Charge; or, The Apprenticeship of Lemuel Barker*, by William Dean Howells; and *In the Clouds*, by Charles Egbert Craddock (Miss Murfree). These three authors are Americans. *Sarracinesca* is a work of art, of admirable clarity and harmony of style and truth of portraiture. Mr. Crawford's pictures of Roman society before the spoliation are admirable. The relations of the old Roman prince and his son are described in a manner worthy of Thackeray. And so firm and true is Mr. Crawford's treatment of his epoch and his personages that—so far as *Sarracinesca* is concerned—it is impossible not to compare him with the greatest masters of his craft. It is a pity that the story of the Princess Sarracinesca could not have been written without the putting into it of that illicit passion that sent Dante's Paolo and Francesca to hell; but it is plain that Mr. Crawford, unlike the *femmes-auteurs*, does not describe passion in order to inspire passion in others. Mr. Crawford's opening chapters, in which he satirically contrasts the Rome of Pope Pius IX. with the Rome of the spoliators, are delightful. His is a very strong pen; it is well to see it in use against the vain and superficial spirit which is flippantly destroying at once the religion and the art of the world.

Mr. Crawford makes an etching of the Roman as he was and is:

"But Rome in those days was peopled solely by Romans, whereas now a large proportion of the population consists of Italians from the north and south, who have been attracted to the capital by many interests—races as different from its former citizens as Germans or Spaniards, and, unfortunately, not disposed to show overmuch good-fellowship or loving-kindness to the original inhabitants. The Roman is a grumbler by nature, but he is also a 'peace-at-any-price' man. Politicians and revolutionary agents have more than once been deceived by these traits, supposing that because the Roman grumbled he really desired change, but realizing too late, when the change has been begun, that the same Roman is but a luke-warm partisan. The Papal government repressed grumbling as a nuisance, and the people consequently took a delight in annoying the authorities by grumbling in secret places and calling themselves conspirators. The harmless whispering of petty discontent was mistaken by the Italian party for the low thunder of a smothered volcano; but, the change being brought about, the Italians find to their disgust that the Roman meant nothing by his murmurings, and that he now not only still grumbles at everything, but takes the trouble to fight the government at every point which concerns the internal management of the city. In the days before the change a paternal government directed the affairs of the little State, and thought it best to remove all possibility of strife by giving the grumblers no voice in public or economic matters. The grumblers made a grievance of this; and then, as soon as the grievance had been redressed, they redoubled their complaints and retrenched themselves within the infallibility of inaction, on the principle that men who persist in doing nothing cannot possibly do wrong."

It is refreshing to read this summing-up of fashionable science and art:

"Those were the days, too, of the old school of artists—men who, if their powers of creation were not always proportioned to their ambition for excellence, were as superior to their more recent successors in their pure conceptions of what art should be as Apelles was to the Pompeiian wall painters, and as the Pompeiians were to modern house-decorators. The age of Overbeck and the last religious painters was almost past, but the age of fashionable artistic debauchery had hardly begun. Water-color was in its infancy; wood-engraving was hardly yet a great profession; but the 'Dirty Boy' had not yet

taken a prize at Paris, nor had indecency become a fine art. The French school had not demonstrated the startling distinction between the nude and the naked, nor had the English school dreamed nightmares of anatomical distortion.

"Darwin's theories had been propagated, but had not yet been passed into law, and very few Romans had heard of them; still less had any one been found to assert that the real truth of these theories would be soon demonstrated retrogressively by the rapid degeneration of men into apes, while apes would hereafter have cause to congratulate themselves upon not having developed into men."

Mr. Howells has neither the dramatic strength of Mr. Crawford, nor his respect for the ideal in literature, nor his fluent and correct style; but he, like all the more important male American writers, has absolute purity of tone. Lemuel Barker, the young New England rustic who goes to Boston, falls into temptation, but into no temptation of the grosser kind in which the true follower of the realists would delight to wallow. The truth is that Mr. Howells, though he professes to be a realist and to describe life as it is, is not a realist. He paints the life around him as he chooses to see it. He fits his human beings for presentation in the pages of a family magazine and in novels which may be read by every young girl in the country. He impresses us as a sincere and pure-minded gentleman who arranges his groups, carefully chosen, each member with his working-clothes on, and then photographs them. But this is not realism. Turgućneff, and Tolstoï, and De Goncourt, and, above all, Zola, would repudiate this method and manner. When Mr. Howells aims to be most realistic he generally succeeds in being commonplace.

His women characters are carefully photographed and gently colored until they almost resemble the miniatures of an artist. The trifles of life are so much a part of the surroundings of women that when Mr. Howells describes

the trifles and the moods which turn on these trifles, we think—that is, if we do not think very closely—that we recognize the woman. Statira and 'Manda Greer, the giggling working-girls of *The Minister's Charge*, are known by certain tricks of manner and speech common to the most frivolous class of Boston working-girls. But we learn nothing of their inner lives—if they have any. Lemuel's love-making in the boarding-house room is innocent enough; but we feel that it is not Lemuel's tender New England conscience or Statira's principles which make it innocent, but the fact that Mr. Howells (though invisible, and with an eye to the fact that he writes for American families) is a most careful chaperon.

The Rev. Mr. Sewall, the minister whose amiable habit of telling pleasant fibs has brought Lemuel to Boston, is a charming character. He is true to life and—we really must admit it—something more than a photograph. He ministers to a very respectable Boston flock; he is sincere in spite of his amiable fibs; he wants to do right and to be father-confessor to his people, without the faintest knowledge of moral theology or any training for the work, except a good heart and some experience of the human race in general and the Bostonians in particular. If Mr. Howells had intended to show how inefficient the most conscientious Protestant minister is, so far as the healing of mental and spiritual wounds go, he could not have better demonstrated it than in showing us Mr. Sewall. Mrs. Sewall is a woman of strong common sense, who has suffered much from the subtle super-sensitiveness of her husband. To her Lemuel, with his recurring mental difficulties and his demands on the minister's time for sermon-writing, is a great trial.

Lemuel in Boston developes a gradual appreciation of the niceties of life. He has left a sordid country home,

where his mother wears bloomers and his brother-in-law does all manner of unpleasant things. He runs up the scale from horse-car conductor to reader to a cultured old Bostonian. He thinks himself hardly good enough to marry the giggling Statira, pushed on by her energetic friend, 'Manda Greer. And the Rev. Mr. Sewall thinks, too, that he will throw himself away if he tie himself to the pretty, silly, and hopelessly narrow-minded Statira. In the meantime Lemuel meets a girl higher in the social plane—an artist—and Lemuel and she fall in love with each other. Mrs. Sewall is indignant at the concern which Lemuel's friends show in the fear that Statira may drag him down, after the marriage has been arranged.

"'Oh! his future. Drag him down! Why don't you think of *her* going up there to that dismal wilderness to spend her days in toil and poverty, with a half-crazy mother-in-law and a rheumatic brother-in-law, in such a looking hovel?' Mrs. Sewall did not group these disadvantages conventionally; but they were effective."

Lemuel himself feels that he is a martyr. He contemplates taking his wife back to his native village, Willoughby Pastures, and of gradually causing that place to live up to him and Boston. The young artist is in the greatest affliction. She knows that Lemuel loves her better than he loves Statira. She asks Mr. Sewall's advice in the matter, without mentioning names. He gives her very unsatisfactory counsel. And so Lemuel—though Mr. Howells, everybody in the book, and perhaps the too sympathetic reader fears that he is "throwing himself away"—drifts toward matrimony with Statira. Statira is threatened with consumption; we are divided between a coming pathetic death-bed and a possible unhappy marriage. But when we have been made sufficiently afraid that she shall die, and quite as much afraid that she will live, Mr. Howells gets her to change her mind, and she

goes off with her steadfast friend, 'Manda Greer, in search of a better climate. In this way the cunning author leaves Lemuel free to marry the young artist.

'Manda Greer is a vigorous creature, and the episode of her attack on Lemuel because he lets Statira pine away without proposing is truly natural, and in a play would "bring down the house" at the end of an act.

Miss Murfree (Charles Egbert Craddock) is not one of Louis Veuillot's "*femmes-auteurs*," who have increased so greatly of late among our neighbors, the English, that Koko, in *The Mikado*, asserts that they "never will be missed." There is "too much paper" in *In the Clouds* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston and New York), and yet it would be hard to say what could be left out. Miss Murfree has practically discovered the mountains of East Tennessee and added a new world to American literature. It is a fresh and breezy world. Nobody that has acquired a taste for it will ever breathe the patchouli and carbonic-acid gas of Ouida, Rhoda Broughton, and their train of "lady novelists." It is the fashion to compare Miss Murfree with George Eliot. Why, it would puzzle even the people who compare Thackeray with Dickens, or Nathaniel Hawthorne with Irving, to tell. *In the Clouds* is certainly as great a novel as *Adam Bede*, which also has the fault of containing "too much paper." Mink, the hero of *In the Clouds*, is as careful a study of human selfishness as Tito in *Romola*, though Mink somewhat redeems himself in the end. But Miss Murfree has none of George Eliot's self-consciousness, and—thank Heaven! —none of her philosophy.

The "poor whites" of the Tennessee mountains, with their rudimentary religion, their crude manners and shiftless ways, are painted with a sure hand, artistic skill, and a sympathy felt by the reader, but hardly verbally ex-

pressed by Miss Murfree. Alethea's home is thus depicted:

"The little log-cabin set among its scanty fields, its weed-grown 'gyarden spot,' and its few fruit-trees, was poor of its kind. The clap-boards of its roof were held in place by poles laid athwart them, with large stones piled between to weight them down. The chimney was of clay and sticks, and leaned away from the wall. In a corner of the rickety rail-fence a gaunt, razor-backed hog lay grunting drowsily. Upon a rude scaffold tobacco-leaves were suspended to dry. Even the martin-house was humble and primitive—merely a post with a cross-bar, from which hung a few large gourds with a cavity in each, whence the birds were continually fluttering. Behind it all, the woods of the steep ascent seemed to touch the sky. The place might give a new meaning to exile, a new sentiment to loneliness. Seldom it heard from the world—so seldom that when the faint rifle-shots sounded in the distance a voice from within demanded eagerly, 'What on yearth be that, Lethe?'

"'Shootin' fur beef down in the cove, I reckon, from thar firin' so constant,' drawled Alethea.

"'Ye dunno,' said the unseen, unexpectedly derisive at this conjecture. 'They mought be a-firin' thar bullets into each other. Nobody kin count on a man by hisself, but a man in company with a rifle air jes' a outdacious, jubious critter.'"

Alethea's stepmother spoke as one who had much experience of the male sex as found in the land of hidden whiskey-stills and moonlighters. Alethea is the heroine of the book, and a noble one. It is a great thing to say of Miss Murfree's art that the girl's drawl and queer pronunciation never seem ridiculous or repel our sympathy. But never for a moment are the outside characteristics, rude, uncouth, ungrammatical, lost sight of. She is as noble as Jeannie Deans, and we forget her tricks of speech and her ignorance in the greatness of her heart and her self-sacrifice. She has a keener sense of right than most of the mountaineers, whose principle article of belief seems to be firm faith in the eternal torments to be suffered by their neighbors. Mink, a handsome, gay, but

shallow herdsman, has been making love to her. Her stepmother thus sums up the position at the beginning of the story:

"An' ye tired his patience out—the critter had mo' 'n I gin him credit fur—an' druv him off at last through wantin' him to be otherwise. An' now forlks 'low ez him an' Elviry Crosby air a-goin' ter marry. I'll be bound she don't harry him none 'bout'n his ways, 'kase her mother told me ez she air mighty nigh a idjit 'bout'n him, an' hev turned off Peter Rood, who she hed promised ter marry, though the weddin' day had been set, an' Pete air wuth forty sech ez Mink.'"

From Alethea's attempt to bring Mink up to her level, and to make him follow the path her untutored sense of right points out, many evils flow. Mink becomes entangled in the net of the law, Peter Rood dies suddenly during a scene of great but restrained power, and Alethea's true character is brought out by severe strain and suffering. *In the Clouds* is not a hopeful book, it is sometimes sombre, but it is relieved by delightful touches of humor. Alethea's aunt, a remarkable personage, furnishes many of them:

"The log-cabin had heard the river sing for nearly a century. It appeared for many years the ready prey of decay; the chimney leaned from the wall, the daubing was falling from the chinking, there were holes in the floor and roof. Suddenly a great change came over it. The frivolity of glass enlivened the windows, where batten shutters had formerly sufficed; a rickety little porch was added; a tiny room was partitioned off from this, and Mrs. Purvine rejoiced in the distinction of possessing a company bed-room, which was far from being a haven of comfort to the occasional occupant of those close quarters. She had always been known to harbor certain ambitions. Her husband's death, some two or three years before, had given her liberty to express her tastes more fully than when hampered by his cautious conservatism. And now, although the fields might be overrun with weeds, and the sheep have the rot and the poultry the cholera, and the cow go dry, and the 'gyarden truck' defer to the crab-grass, and the bees—clever insects—prepare only sufficient

honey for their own use, Mrs. Purvine preserved the appearance of having made a great rise in life, and was considered by the casual observer a 'mighty spry widder woman.' Such a one as Mrs. Sayles shook her head and spared not the vocabulary. 'Dely,' she would observe, 'air my husband's sister, an' I an't goin' to make no words about her. Ef she was ennybody else's sister, I'd up and down declar ez she hev been snared in the devices o' the devil, fur sech pride ez hern an't godley—naw, sir! nur religion nuther. Glass in the winder! Shucks! She'd better be thinkin' 'bout gittin' light on salvation—that she hed! Forlks ez knowed Dely whenst she war a gal knowed she war headin' and sot agin her elders, an' run away from home ter git married, an' this is what kem of sech onregenerate ways. *Glass* in the winder! I'll be bound the devil looks through that winder every day at yer Aunt Dely whenst she sits thar and spins. Naw, sir, yer Aunt Dely'll remember that winder in the darkness o' Torment, an' ef she war ennybody else's sister than my own husband's *I'd say so.*'"

Mrs. Purvine also has her own religious opinions. When Mink, in hiding, asks what she will say if they "ax her," she promptly replies:

"'Waal, lies is healthy.' Mrs. Purvine accommodated her singular ethics to many emergencies. 'Churchyards are toler'ble full, but thar an't nobody thar ez died from tellin' lies. Not but what I'm a perfessin' Christian,' she qualified, with a qualm of conscience, 'an' hev renounced deceit in general; but if ennybody kems hyar inquirin' roun' 'bout my business—what I done with this little mite o' meat, an' that biscuit, an' the t'other pot o' coffee—I answer the foolish accordin' to his folly, like the Bible tells me, an' send him rejicin' on his way.'"

The character of Judge Gwinnan is strong, perfectly understood by the author, and perfectly expressed. For a time a slight fear arises that he may marry Alethea, by whose beauty and nobility he is evidently moved. This could have only made both more unhappy than they are finally left by the author; for no observer of human life can doubt that if the judge in Whittier's sentimental

verses had married Maud Muller it would have been a bad thing for both of them. Judge Gwinnan's case is somewhat analogous. Miss Murfree's *In the Clouds* is an important addition to genuine American literature.

Woolson: "Rodman the Keeper."

Miss Constance Fenimore Woolson's *Rodman the Keeper* (New York: Harper & Bro.) is a volume of short stories. *East Angels*, clever as it was, left a bad taste in the mouth. There was no excuse for the suggestion of immorality introduced into one scene of that well-told story. In *Rodman the Keeper* there is an intense love of color in nature. Floridian everglades, rivers, and orange-groves start out vividly before our eyes, as the figures do in the popular cycloramas of the battles of the late civil war. Miss Woolson's men, like the men created by most women writers, are artificial and priggish. "Miss Elizabetha" is a story in Miss Woolson's best manner. There is a refined and soft-toned description of the quiet life of Miss Elizabetha in her house on the Florida coast. She teaches her nephew ancient romanzas, learned long ago, to the accompaniment of a tinkling piano. Miss Elizabetha, once a gentlewoman of means, teaches music, sells the product of her orange-grove, plaits palmetto—all for the sake of hoarding money for her half-Spanish nephew. The sisters at the convent near paid her to teach, "and were glad to call in Miss Elizabetha with her trills and quavers; so the wiry organ in the little cathedral sounded out the ballads and romanzas of Monsieur Vicard, and the demoiselles learned to sing them in their broken French, no doubt greatly to the satisfaction of the golden-skinned old fathers and mothers on the plantations down the coast. The *padre* in charge of the parish had often importuned Miss Elizabetha to play this organ on

Sundays, as the decorous celebration of High Mass suffered sadly, not to say ludicrously, from the blunders of poor Sister Paula. But Miss Elizabetha—who was from the North—"briefly refused: she must draw a line somewhere, and a pagan ceremonial she could not countenance. The Daarg family, while abhorring greatly the Puritanism of the New England colonies, had yet held themselves equally aloof from the image-worship of Rome; and they had always considered it one of the inscrutable mysteries of Providence that the French nation, so skilled in polite attitude, so versed in the singing of romanzas, should yet have been allowed to remain so long in ignorance of the correct religious mean."

But after a while the half-Spanish nephew marries a pretty Minorcan and reverts to the original type, leaving poor Miss Elizabetha to wonder where all her thrifty training has gone. Miss Woolson is fond of contrasting the hard New England Puritan with the Creole Catholic, and she succeeds very well in this; and Catholics have no reason to complain of her treatment of such of their qualities as she can grasp. "Sister St. Luke" is an improbable narrative; but the gentleness, piety, and purity of the quaint religious are undoubted, though her simpleness is perhaps somewhat overdrawn

Mulholland: "Marcella Grace."

The novel of Irish domestic life has an exponent of high talent—we are almost justified in using the mighty word genius—in Miss Rosa Mulholland. Her *Marcella Grace* (Harper & Bros.) is an admirable novel, in no way inferior, yet differing in quality from two of the most charming stories of late years, *The Wicked Woods of Tobevervil* and *The Birds of Killeevy.*

Kickham: "For the Old Land."

For the Old Land, by the late Charles J. Kickham (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son), opens with a description of an Irish farm-interior after the manner of Gerald Griffin, and Mrs. Dwyer's idiosyncrasies give a promise which the rest of the novel does not fulfil. The twenty-two illustrations are mostly as bad as they can be.

Besant: "Children of Gibeon."

The question of satisfying the needs of the poor by curtailing the privileges and remodelling the habits of the rich is found to be of ceaseless interest to contemporary novel-writers. Mr. Walter Besant treats it in his *Children of Gibeon* (Harper & Bros.) He does not advocate violent means. To close up the chasm yearly widening in civilization between the rich and the poor, the rich must extend their hearts and their hands; voluntary self-sacrifice on their part must follow a completer understanding of the real needs of the poor. Mr. Besant imagines an improbable plot, in order to make an impressive novel. Lady Mildred Eldridge adopts the daughter of a washerwoman who has a large family, and whose husband—*in statu quo* at the beginning of the story—has been a burglar. She has one infant daughter. She mixes the two girls up—calling one Violet, the other Valentine. They are brought up after the manner of patrician young women. Valentine studies the working-people in London, and as nearly as possible makes herself one of them, in the belief that, when Lady Mildred will declare which is which, she will be found to be the washerwoman's daughter. She gets very near to her brothers and sisters, and learns that tracts and condescensions are not the means of helping those who most need help. St. Elizabeth of Hungary taught this long ago, as did St. Francis d'Assisi; but our

novelists do not go to the saints for lessons. Mr. Besant does not think that Protestantism can help the poor, and he seems to know very little of the church. He does not say how he would keep his working-girls good and pure after they had been well fed, decently clothed, and innocently amused. After all, people who are clean and industrious and fond of music commit hideous crimes; therefore, though Mr. Besant does not seem to see it, something more is needed to save the world. Marcus Aurelius was a keen philosopher and a plausible one; but Jesus Christ alone could take away the curse from life and the sting from death. Valentine turns out to be the patrician, and she elects to live and work among the poor; Violet clings to riches and shudders at the coarseness of poverty: education has triumphed over plebeian blood. Mr. Besant's people are clear-cut and individual. His sneers at the confessional are perfunctory. His novel is worth reading and thinking about.

Woolson: "East Angels."

A novel which has had a great success is *East Angels*, by Constance Fenimore Woolson, author of *Anne* (Harper & Brothers). It, too, is long, making five hundred and ninety-one pages. East Angels is a place near the town of Gracias-á-Dios in Florida. Miss Woolson paints the blue sky, the oranges, the roses, the miasmatic swamps of Florida, with a sure and leisurely hand. The sketches of Floridians themselves are delightfully humorous and sympathetic. The Northerners who come to this spot blessed with perpetual sunlight are vigorously etched. Mrs. Rutherford is a type of the selfish and cold woman of fashion and wealth, growing old, with no god but comfort and no consolation but gratified vanity. Her manner of judging people is not uncommon, and it has too often

its effect in ruined reputations whose ruin can be traced to prejudices like those of Mrs. Rutherford:

"If Mr. X. had been polite to her, if he had been attentive, deferential he was without doubt (if at all presentable) a most delightful and praiseworthy person in every way. If Mr. X. had been civil to a certain extent, yet on the whole rather indifferent, he was a little dull, she thought; a good sort of a man, perhaps, but not interesting; tiresome. If Mr. X. had simply left her alone, without either civility or incivility, she was apt to have mysterious intuitions about him, intuitions which she mentioned, confidentially, of course, to her friends; little things which she had noticed—indications. Of bad temper? Or was it bad habits? It was something bad, at any rate; she was very ingenious in reading the signs. But if Mr. X. had been guilty of actual rudeness (a quality which she judged strictly by the standard of her own hidden but rigorous requirements), Mr. X. was immediately thrust beyond the pale—there was no good in him; in the way of odious traits there was nothing which she did not attribute to him at one time or another; she could even hint a darker guilt. She wondered that people should continue to receive him, and to her dying day she never forgot to give, upon opportunity, her well-aimed thrust—a thrust all the more effective because masked by her reputation for amiability and frank, liberal qualities."

Mrs. Rutherford and Garda Thorne—the latter the daughter of a Floridian of Spanish descent and of a New Hampshire mother—are exemplifications of the triumph of selfishness over all finer qualities. Garda is a very charming creature in appearance. All the unmarried men who have come together in Gracias-á-Dios fall in love with her, and one of the married men follows suit. Garda, who is utterly regardless of the proprieties, and who has no sense of right and wrong, promises to marry Evert Winthrop, but coolly drops him when she finds she likes Lucian Spenser better. Spenser is married, but that makes no difference to Garda. Margaret Harold, the real heroine of the novel, has taken Garda under her protection; she remonstrates with this strange young girl,

who seems to be unconscious of her duties to God, who is more like a faun than a human being. Garda merely replies, "There's one thing that may happen: I may stop caring for Lucian of my own accord before long. You know I stopped caring for Evert." Garda further insists that it is better to be true to one's feelings, whatever they are, than to tell lies just to make people think well of you.

Margaret is helpless before the girl's frankness; but she does not attempt to arouse Garda to a sense that her regard for a married man is guilty in the sight of God. The Rev. Mr. Moore, whose character is drawn with a fine sense of humor, has had the religious care of Garda —so far as a Protestant Episcopal rector can have the spiritual care of one of his flock, when his mission seems to be so decidedly social as that of the Rev. Mr. Moore's was. We naturally expect to hear Garda respond to some appeal to a supernatural motive for the avoidance of sin. But no such appeal is made by Margaret who later makes a most heroic sacrifice herself, because she believes that marriage is indissoluble. In spite of all the admirable qualities of Miss Woolson's work—its power restrained and disciplined, its charming humor saved by a genial sympathy from being satire, and its introduction into the literature of American fiction of a new element essentially American—the lack of the highest Christian motives as influencing the actions of her personages is a grave defect. It is impossible that Garda should not have known right from wrong, or that she should go joyously to keep an assignation with a married man without some feeling of guilt. Even had Garda been brought up an Agnostic there would still have been some self-consciousness. Then Margaret might have considered it hopeless to have mentioned the name of Christ or to have spoken of the claims of Christian modesty. As it is, Miss Wool-

son asks us to believe that this brilliant young siren of Gracias-á-Dios had neither soul nor conscience. This is demanding more than any artist who cares for *vraisemblance* should. Garda becomes, when she ceases to laugh at the antics of her pet crane or swing gaily in her hammock, while her overburdened little mother does the work, a disjointed and unrealizable creature. Margaret Harold's character is always presented in a noble aspect. She married, when very young, one of the most heartless specimens of the male sex conceivable—a sensualist made tolerable to his friends by a kind of sardonic serenity. He coolly deserts her, and goes to Europe to renew his relations with "a French lady of rank." He returns, fearing that his health is breaking, to be nursed by Margaret. He has never made any concealment of his vices and his infidelity. He asserts his right to Margaret's service, and she admits it without complaint. Lanse, her husband, thus describes the situation when he serenely proposes to desert his wife for a time: "Her point was that I must not go; I am not very yielding, as you know, but she was even more obstinate than I was. It was owing to the ideas she had about such things; she wasn't a Roman Catholic, but she thought marriage a sacrament, almost." Lanse remains at Gracias-á-Dios for a time, paralyzed and helpless; but, getting better, he starts again for Europe, following his old attraction. Margaret has discovered that she loves Evert Winthrop, the rejected suitor of Garda, and Winthrop returns her affection. When her husband disappears she goes with Winthrop to look for him in the swamps. The boat-ride through these pathless, dank, and weird spots, where the waters are alive with moccasins and strange, perfumed vines mingle with interlacing trees, is described with vividness and strength. Winthrop and Margaret are tempted, and the temptation

is needlessly elaborated. It becomes very plain indeed that Margaret need only show the slightest sign of yielding to become a Francesca di Rimini. The French do not put situations like this into their novels for young girls; but perhaps Miss Woolson did not write *East Angels* for young girls. It is a pity that she should apply her wonderful equipment to the evolution of situations in which the sympathy of the tender-hearted reader must naturally be on the side of wrong. Margaret, in whose religious belief divorce from her husband would have seemed proper enough, refuses Winthrop, that she may wait until her husband returns a second time, utterly helpless. If she were a Catholic, believing that marriage is indissoluble, her sacrifice would have a motive. As it is, she reaches a supernatural height of self-sacrifice without even a natural incentive. She devotes herself to Lanse, who settles down to a quiet life because he can no longer be wicked; and so Margaret's career ends. Miss Woolson might have made Margaret more satisfactory by giving her the only reason for the existence of such self-sacrifice—a high religious one; and the book need not have been a religious novel. The principal personages are spoiled by their entire lack of conscience, although Margaret will be thought by many readers to have too much. Miss Woolson fails to reach the truth in her clever paintings of human beings, because she has that fatal timidity which emasculates much modern literature—the fear of boldly referring to God as a living God.

Greey: "The Captive of Love."

The translation of *The Loyal Ronius* from the Japanese whetted the appetite of the public for more romances from the same source. The appearance of Mr. Edward Greey's adaptation of Bakin's *Kumono Tayema Ama Yo*

No Tsuki ("The moon shining through a cloud-rift on a rainy night") is due to the interest aroused by that book in the beliefs and customs of this strangely childlike yet singularly mature people. Mr. Greey calls his translation *The Captive of Love* (Boston: Lee & Shepard). Bakin's romances are looked on as classic in Japan. They represent the every-day life of the Japanese of five hundred years ago, and give the key to the Japanese life of to-day. The mikado and the empress of Japan have informed Mr. Greey of the pleasure they have had in seeing this famous Japanese book in an English dress. Mr. Greey has acquired the art of giving the quaint aroma of Bakin's diction, and the illustrations from the original work are very harmonious with the text. The Buddhistic belief in metempsychosis forms the basis of the story of a priest (*bozu*) who, instead of remaining in the temple of Shin-gon sect of Buddhists and praying for the eternal happiness of his parents, was led away by love to the breaking of his vows and the commission of many crimes. Bakin tells with charming *naïveté* the results of unfaithfulness and fraud, the consequence of disrespect to parents, and particularly of omitting to pray for their souls that they may more speedily pass through their various forms of life and attain seats on the golden lotus—which is complete annihilation. *The Captive of Love* is both amusing and instructive. Nowhere else can more information about the thoughts and the methods of the Japanese be so easily derived. Whether we owe it to Bakin, the pagan, or to Mr. Greey, the Christian, there is nothing objectionable in *The Captive of Love*. In it we find the very essence of Japanese life. Manzoni's *I Promessi Sposi* is not more redolent of Italy than this delightful romance is of Japan. It is invaluable to all who would like to understand the religion, the manners and customs

of the Japanese, which are only now beginning to change. We owe to Mr. Greey and to his wife, a graduate of an English convent school, who has ably assisted him, a debt of gratitude for this valuable addition to our literature.

Luska: "Mrs. Peixada."

Mrs. Peixada is a new novel by Sydney Luska, author of *As It Was Written* (Cassell & Co.) Mr. Luska's art of casting a romantic glamour over every-day New York scenes, and the directness with which he attacks his themes, have gained him much vogue. Mrs. Peixada is a Jewess, of course, who kills her husband, a very unpleasant Jew, in self-defence, and marries a Christian. Mr. Luska—whose real name is Harlan—seems to believe that the great future for the Jews is an amalgamation with Christians and the production of a light and sweet Spinoza-like state of things. He is a clever writer, of great promise, striking out a new line for himself, and not dazzled by the claims of the analytical school of fiction. Whether the hero, Arthur Ripley, adopted the creed of his Jewish wife, or she his, Mr. Luska does not say; and therefore we cannot say whether the American Jew or Jewess of the future will believe in anything or not.

Sturgis: "John Maidment."

John Maidment, by Julian Sturgis, is a wholesome novel, well written, manly, and having a purpose. John Maidment is a handsome, strong-brained, well-educated young Englishman. He starts in life encumbered by only one thing—a debt of gratitude. He sacrifices his convictions and principles to success. He gains all that he wants, and yet, though no outward calamity overtakes him, though he has married an earl's daughter who adores him, though he seems on his way to the British Cabinet,

he feels that he has not gained the truest success. Mr. Sturgis manages his story with consummate skill. Novels like *John Maidment* almost reconcile the reviewer to the task of sifting "light" literature.

Walloch: "The King's Treasure House."

The King's Treasure House, by Wilhelm Walloch, translated from the German by Mary J. Safford (New York: Gottsberger), is an Egyptian romance of the time of the Hebrew captivity. It is after the manner of Georg Ebers. It gives the impression that the Jews of the era of Rameses were people any prudent monarch would allow to depart with pleasure from his dominions. *King Arthur*, by Miss Muloch (Harper's), is a very pure, pathetic, and beautiful story. *A Victorious Defeat*, by Wolcott Balestier, is a curious study of the manners of the Pennsylvanian Moravians.

Craven: "Le Valbriant."

Mrs. Craven, whose *Sister's Story*, *Eliane*, and *Fleurange* are read and re-read by thousands of admirers, has written another novel, *Le Valbriant* (Paris: Perrin & Co.), now in its sixth edition. It has been published in England under the title of *Lucie*, and it will shortly appear with an American reprint.

There are not so many novelists offering antidotes to the literary poison that permeates society that any book of fiction written with a high motive can be neglected. Mrs. Craven, who is acknowledged by critics entirely out of sympathy with her motives as a writer of the first class, is in the first rank of those who use all the graces of a polished style, a refined art, a vivid but restrained imagination in the interest of Christian morality. *Le Valbriant* has all these attributes. It has been complained of Mrs.

Craven that she limits herself too much to the atmosphere of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, that all her characters are drawn from the life of the society which is called "good," and that she is too sentimental. Mrs. Craven does well to confine herself to the society she knows best. In no novels of the present time is there less snobbishness shown. If her people have been affected by an artificial and very rarefied state of society, it is not because she wills it so, but because they are so. The lesson of all her books—that of *Le Valbriant* as well as the others—is, life is not long enough for love. Its best expression is the famous motto of the ring in *A Sister's Story—La vie, c'est trop court.* In one of the closing passages of *Le Valbriant* she repeats it:

"The sun—a winter's sun, but pure and brilliant—rose the next day in a cloudless sky. All the people of Valbriant, we may well believe, took part in the festival. Father Severin was at the altar, at the foot of which Lucie and Gauthier had just knelt. It was not an ordinary marriage. Suffering had left deep traces in the two lives that were about to mingle, and, for these spouses, happiness was not without gravity. *But in the souls of both a sort of security which the most ardent hopes of earth are powerless to give assured them of the future, the undefined future. If it had been said to them that they were united for life, they would have answered: 'C'est trop court, la vie!'*"

If this is sentimentalism it is of a very high order—so high, indeed, that Mrs. Craven deserves all praise for teaching it. In nearly all novels marriage is the end. The books close as soon as the union of the hero and heroine is announced. They are supposed to have attained the sum of human happiness. They enter into a flowery garden spanned by perpetual rainbows which will last for ever. Life is long enough for them, and they desire nothing better. But Mrs. Craven's teaching is very different. She believes with Madame Swetchine that

marriage is the beginning, not the end; that the Sacrament of Matrimony is a preparation for eternal life, and that human love would be worthless if it were not irradiated by the hope of eternal love.

When this doctrine is taught by a writer who in exquisite taste, style, and force of interest is the equal of the novelist of fashionable France, Octave Feuillet, we ought to be grateful that Providence has raised up such a teacher. *A Sister's Story* has become a classic, *Fleurange* has been translated into all the languages of Europe, and we are justified in considering the appearance of *Le Valbriant* as an event of great literary importance. The scene is laid near a quiet village of France, where stands the Château de Bois d'Harlay. Count Geoffrey lives in the old house with his servants. He had been an emigrant. In London he had met Léontine de Lerens, whose father had been slaughtered during the Terror. Léontine was working hard to support her grandmother, the Duchess de Lerens. He and all the London colony of French gentlemen were toiling as they had never before dreamed of working. Charmed with Léontine's beauty and self-sacrifice, he married her at London just as the white flag was unfurled in honor of the accession of Louis XVIII. Madame de Bois d'Harlay, who had accepted misfortune so bravely, was not equal to her sudden accession to the splendid place that was her own by birth. She saw no difference between the France of Louis XVI. and that of Louis XVIII.; and her good-fortune was embittered by her husband's disposition to accept things as they were.

The character of the Countess de Bois d'Harlay is described with fineness of perception. It is one of the most important in *Le Valbriant.* Although the countess is made to die in an early chapter, her influence moulds the

lives of her husband and daughter. Mrs. Craven has made a very instructive and subtle picture of the state of mind of so many French aristocrats who found wealth and luxury, shorn of the privileges of their order, more than they could endure.

Lucie de Bois d'Harlay has made an unhappy marriage, but a splendid one in the eyes of her late mother. Count Geoffrey, alone in his château, knows that his daughter has married a villain, and he suffers with her in imagination. He is a dignified and noble personage. He finds some consolation in the friendship of his neighbor at Le Valbriant—a village which has been made a model for the vicinity and all France by Gauthier d'Arcy, whose father had accepted the new order of things and turned his château into a foundry. Mrs. Craven's solution of a social problem will doubtless meet with some vigorous criticism from the irreconcilables who read her novels; there are not many of them who would be willing to save the country around them from poverty and the crimes that extreme poverty fosters by devoting their castles to the purposes of trade. The usual French novelist would have made a thrilling romance out of the unhappy married life of Lucie, in which passion would play a great part. Mrs. Craven gives us the picture of a wife who has received the Sacrament of Matrimony worthily, and who knows the duty of a wife. It would be a pity in this case to tell by what means Lucie finally marries the proprietor of Le Valbriant and enters into the plans of her husband for the improvement of his workmen. It is sufficient to say that it is brought about by no violation of probability or propriety; and when we close *Le Valbriant* we feel as if we had spent our time in the society of people whose lives are impregnated with Catholic teaching, though there is no word of controversy in the book.

Howe: "The Moonlight Boy."

Mr. E. W. Howe's *The Story of a Country Town* was an unexpected success. *The Moonlight Boy*—his latest novel—will no doubt find many readers. It is less sombre than his first book; it is characterized by directness and novelty of manner. There is no analysis, no self-consciousness. Mr. Howe sketches from life as he sees it, without reference to the old masters. His lights and shadows are sometimes exaggerated; he has none of the delicate manipulations that are so noticeable in Messrs. Howells and James; but he has the courage and the power to interpret things for himself. The moonlight boy is a foundling who has been adopted by a kind-hearted husband and wife, Tibby and Mrs. Cole. Tibby is a musician, a teacher of singing-schools, country brass bands, and a seller of organs. Just about the time that the supposed paternity of the moonlight boy is discovered, and he is sent to take his place as a "Courtlandt, of Bleecker Street," "Queen Mary," the only child of the Coles, appears, and Tibby leaves off drinking. From this time the downfall of the Coles begins, in the opinion of the moonlight boy. Tibby was so much more genial as a singing-master in his cups than out of them that his chronicler regrets his reform! The experiences of the country boy, with neither good looks, good manners, nor education, in New York, are told in a crisp and original manner. Mr. Howe's hero has nothing to recommend him to the reader or to that fate which awards glory to the heroes of novels, except good impulses and a lively sense of gratitude. The humor of the book is natural and seems unconscious. It has the merits of Dickens' earlier novels, without being at all an imitation of him. The moonlight boy has an experience in the office of the *Night Watch*, a religious weekly of immense circulation in the country. The only man who believed

in the highly moral doctrines taught in this great weekly was the figure-head of the concern, who was not allowed to do anything. Barton, the manager of this concern, runs away from his family, with some reason, it must be confessed. It is regrettable that Mr. Howe should have permitted Barton, who is represented as a man to be pitied and even admired, to abet his wife in obtaining a divorce. *The Moonlight Boy* is a collection of odd people who have hearts—or parts of hearts—but no souls to speak of.

Cook: "The Sphynx's Children and Other People's."

The Sphynx's Children and Other People's, by Rose Terry Cook, author of *Somebody's Neighbors* (Boston: Ticknor & Co.), is made up of short stories of New England life. They suffer from the literary limitations which injure the effect of short stories. It is only a very great master who can write a thoroughly satisfactory short story. The weakness of Miss Cook's stories is the weakness of most short stories—the sudden transitions at the end. No more graphic pictures of New England farm-life have ever been put into print. The dreariness of Millet's French peasants striving to wrest a living from small patches of soil, and working from dawn to sunset, is gayety itself in comparison with the awful grimness of the life of the New England farmer of the last generation. The French peasants have their consolatory and hopeful Angelus, symbolical of their religion of joy and hope; but for the Puritan New-Englander there was no joy on earth and little hope. The "Account of Thomas Tucker" is one of the best things in the book. Thomas, the son of a hard New England farmer, becomes the pastor of a fashionable church, and makes himself unpopular by calling a

spade a spade and pointing out the sins of the people, until his congregation resolve to get rid of him. Miss Cook tells of the life he and his sister had led under the rule of their father, "who ploughed the brown sod of the sad New England hills under the full force of the primeval curse."

"Amasa was a hard man, gathering where he had not strewn, and reaping where he had not sown, and a tyrant where a man can be tyrannical in safety—in his own home. Two children out of ten survived to this pair. Abundant dosing, insufficient food, and a neglected sink-drain had killed all the others who outlived their earliest infancy; but these two avoided the doom that had fallen on their brother and sisters, by the fate which modern science calls the survival of the fittest, and spindled up among the mullein-stalks of their stone-strewn pastures as gray, lank, dry, and forlorn as the mulleins themselves; with pale eyes, straight, white hair, sallow faces, and the shy aspect of creatures who live in the woods and are startled at a strange footstep. They were taught to work as soon as they could walk, to consider sin and holiness the only things worth consideration, to attend meeting as a necessity, and to take deserved punishment in silence. To obedience and endurance their physical training, or want of training, conduced also; alternate pie and pork are not an enlivening diet to soul and body, and play was an unknown factor in their dreary existence."

Astor: "Valentino."

If Mr. W. W. Astor's *Valentino* had been written by a gentleman whose name would have been less of an advertisement it is doubtful whether it would have so soon found its way into a fourth edition. As a novel it has no reason to exist. As a historical picture of the times it has a certain worth, but no more than a dozen books already printed. With Roscoe's *Leo X.* and Machiavelli's *Prince* any man of ordinary perception could have made quite as good a picture. Mr. Astor, with his opportunities, might have made better use of his materials. The "new

view" of Lucrezia Borgia which the advertisements of *Valentino* promised us turns out to be an old view. No reader of the history we call Italian ever imagined that the character of Lucrezia Borgia was that of a fiend; but every indolent frequenter of the theatre and lounger over light novels accepted a vile view of a woman who had human faults, but more than counterbalancing Christian virtues. Mr. Astor takes the vulgar side as to Pope Alexander VI.

Howells: "Indian Summer."

Indian Summer (Boston: Ticknor & Co.) is the novel of an artistic realist—a literary photographer who is careful how he poses his sitters. Any book from the pen that wrote *A Modern Instance* and *The Rise of Silas Lapham* is sure of a large circle of readers. Mr. Howells is not a great writer. He is more like Miss Austen than Thackeray, and worthy to be compared to M. Alphonse Daudet, who is not a great writer either, but, in manner, a very charming one. *Indian Summer* is characterized by that serene good-humor and delicate sarcasm and keenness of observing small symptoms of character which make one of the chief qualities of Howells' work. But it is not as robust in character as *A Modern Instance* or *Silas Lapham.* It is realistic, but its realism, being tinged with foreign color, will not provoke the appreciation that followed all the delightful photography of *A Modern Instance*, or the shouts of applause that were drawn out by the tableau of Silas Lapham's false step at the Corey dinner. Mr. Howells' new success in *Silas Lapham* throws *Indian Summer* into the shade.

Jackson: "Zeph: a Posthumous Story."

Mrs. Jackson's ("H. H.") novel *Ramona* should have been her last. It was characterized by all the best quali-

ties of her nature, which towards the end and best part of her literary career seemed to be getting more and more in sympathy with the church, whose inspiration and influence she honored cordially in her remarkable series of papers on the early missions in California. *Ramona*, like *Ben Hur*, is one of the late books that a careful critic can recommend. It is a worthy monument to the memory of a woman of letters of whose fame every American has reason to be proud. In her earlier performances, even in her poems, there were traces of prejudice against the church; but in her later and fuller work there was a tenderness and sympathy for the church and her priests that have left on the minds of Catholics, drawn towards her by the articles on Fra Junipero Serra and the novel *Ramona*, a grieving wonder that she did not at last become one of that visible circle to which she seemed to be tending. *Zeph: a Posthumous Story* (Boston: Roberts Brothers) has insight into character, pathos, keen humor, and sympathy with the sufferings of poor humanity; but it should not have come after that well-rounded book, *Ramona*. Miss Sophy Burr is a New England old maid keeping a thrifty boarding-house in a Colorado town. She is not an unusual type of the Eastern old maid as found in stories. Her angularities have all a kind of grim humor about them. She has opinions of her own:

"'Just look at that man all doubled up there in the poor-pews. I do declare,' she says, looking at the interior of the Presbyterian church—'I do declare, I think it's a shame to have any such thing as poor-pews; it's a kind o' badge o' disgrace to sit there; I've known lots n' lots o' poor folks that wouldn't set foot in 'em, not if they never heard a sermon t' their dyin' day, they said. I always feel ashamed when I go by and shut the door t' my pew. It's borne on me 't 'an't Christian. I think the Catholics are lots better 'n we are about that—lots. There an't anything but poor-pews 'n their churches, 'n that's the way it ought to be—free to all.'

"'How you do talk, Sophy!' replied her companion, good Mrs. Jones. 'Why don't you be a Catholic 'n' done with it, if you think their way 's so much better than ours?'

"'I don't,' retorted Miss Sophy—'nothin' o' the kind. But I say they've got the right idea of seatin' people. No wonder they get all the poor people; I should think they would.'"

Zeph is a miserable and inconsistent specimen of humanity. His wife, Rushy, is a disreputable creature, who disappears at intervals, taking the children with her. Zeph drops work during these intervals and sneaks about his wife's haunts, waiting patiently for her to return to him. He knows that she is leading a shameful life with dissolute companions, but he congratulates himself that she has the children with her. Miss Sophy, thrifty and capable, takes a fancy to the shiftless Zeph, and, when his wife succeeds in divorcing herself from him and in "marrying" one of her admirers, Miss Sophy marries Zeph, who with the greatest coolness, which contrasts singularly with his former absurd devotion to his wife, prepares to leave Colorado and his children, to begin life over again with Miss Sophy. The story is not finished, but from the outline left by the dying writer it is plain that the breach of morality made by Zeph and Miss Sophy in marrying was not condemned by her.

Picard: "Mission Flower."

A story with a new flavor is Dr. George H. Picard's *Mission Flower* (New York: White, Stokes & Allen). It is a thoroughly American novel, without any touch of New-Englandism—which is singular. There is really, so far as we have seen, no allusion to the *Mayflower* or to Boston. The scene is laid among Americans of Spanish blood, in a new, far western country. There are several English people introduced, but they are not presented to

us in the usual self-conscious, international way. Nelly Paradise, whose father sends her to America to prevent her from entering the church, falls into a very nest of Jesuits at the mission of St. Xavier's-in-the-Valley; she is perhaps a little frivolous, but very real; and so truly does she appear to the reader that one is in doubt whether her apparent frivolity is not solely due to the author's point of view. What plot there is is badly managed. The author's efforts at tragedy always end in the serio-comic. For instance, the villain of the book, Manuel Silva, who is only half a villain, can get nobody to do him justice. He begs the officers of the law to imprison him; but they will not take the risk of committing the murderer of an unpopular man to prison, and so he is forced to live.

If Miss Paradise is somewhat giddy and her desire to enter a convent is directed by the "becomingness" of the habit, Doña Sola, who hopes that she has a vocation, is serious enough. But there is a vagueness about the religious aspirations of these young women, both of whom are Protestants, that throws a doubt on the perfect understanding on the part of the author of the motives that determine a true vocation. He knows very well the exterior surface of Catholic life; he has evidently lived much among Catholics. One is almost tempted to say that the quaint humor of the scene between Père Caron and the novice, in which Nelly Paradise takes part, could only be conceived by a Catholic. Père Caron is teaching the novice the use of the "irons" for making the altar-bread, when Nelly Paradise interrupts him.

The old Jesuit laughingly gives the burned and spoiled "breads" to his assistant. Nelly's High-Church horror when one is offered to her is very funny indeed. There are a hundred touches that make one suspect that Dr. Picard is a Catholic, but an undertone of humorous pessimism

which always casts the shade of a doubt. The charming old superior of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, with her courtly manner borrowed from her life in the France of by-gone days, is a new figure in literature. The author of *A Mission Flower* possesses very high talent. He is the master of a clear and plastic style, which is a worthy instrument for the conveyance of new and interesting impressions of people and things.

Story: "Fiammetta: a Summer Idyl."

Fiammetta: A Summer Idyl (Boston, New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), by William Wetmore Story, is an Italian romance, and a very romantic romance. Fiammetta is the usually guileless Italian girl; Count Marco is the unusually guileless artist who finds in Fiammetta an ideal model and goes off when he finds that she is in love with him. The judicious reader will grieve or perhaps become angry over Fiammetta's foolish grandparents. These stupid old people have seen their daughter "go to the bad" through too much "gallivanting" with strange young tourists, but they let Fiammetta do as she pleases. Finally Fiammetta, after Marco has gone, begins to fade away. The village priest is then introduced.

"'I could not help it, padre,' she says. 'I loved him—I loved him; and I love him still, with all my soul! To me there is no one else in the world. And he is gone, and I never shall see him again, and I do not wish to live any longer. There is nobody I can say this to but to you; and oh! I feel that I must say it to somebody. I have done nothing wrong, padre, believe me—I have done nothing wrong; but I am so unhappy.'"

Padre Anselm sends for Marco, and Fiammetta dies happy. In spite of a very correct style and careful local coloring, artistic and poetical dialogues, and other proper accessories, Fiammetta is not an interesting story. We are

told that the characters are Italians; they have Italian names, they utter an Italian word at decent intervals, but they might be Poles or Scandinavians, for all that. It is hard to find fault with a novel in which the proprieties of art have been so well consulted, in which the purity of the English language and the conventions of life are not outraged; but, nevertheless, *Fiammetta* lacks vitality, without which all other qualities in a novel are useless.

Tolstoi: "War and Peace."

Count Tolstoï's novel, *War and Peace*, following his recent exposition of his religious opinions in *My Religion*, had a certain *succès d'estime*. Much was expected from it, and much disappointment was felt after Gottsberger, who is the one New York publisher making a specialty of translations, had printed it. It is in two volumes, but it does not end there. The two volumes are called, in addition to the regular title, *Before Tilsit*. Where it does end nobody knows yet. It is a series of pictures of Russian life, done with evident fidelity and entire knowledge, somewhat after the manner of the Flemish author, Hendrik Conscience, but in no sense reminding us of Tourgueneff, by all odds the greatest, if the saddest, most pessimistic and sceptical, Russian writer known to the English-reading public. *War and Peace* is a terrible picture of Russian life, superstitious at the approach of death; the women frivolous or sad, accepting the forms of a state-degraded church, but seldom penetrating to the real sweetness and consolation of religion. The premature love-making of the children in one of the aristocratic households described by Count Tolstoï does not seem to strike him as a reprehensible thing. Pierre, who is the natural son of Count Besoukhow, and on that account received into the best society, is a robust young man, de-

spising conventionalities, openly simple and honest, but steeped to the eyes in all the corruption of the circle of young Russians to which he belongs. He is a frank young animal, and a type of the aristocratic Russian youth not yet Frenchified. Prince André and his sister give hope of better things; but it is in spite of all the influences and surroundings of their lives. The Princess Marie manages, through purity of heart and extraordinary grace, to secure spiritual nourishment in the arid soil of Russian orthodoxy. It is the development of this character and that of Prince André that gives interest to Count Tolstoï's interminable succession of military scenes. To any one that wants to understand the hopelessness of Russian life we commend *War and Peace.* It is strange that a character like that of Mme. Swetchine could have gathered beauty in such an atmosphere.

Oliphant: "A Country Gentleman." "A House Divided against Itself."

Mrs. Oliphant's novels, *A Country Gentleman* and *A House Divided against Itself* (Harper & Bros.), are worthy of the only legitimate successor in English literature of Miss Austen. *A Country Gentleman* is the better of the two. It is told with all Mrs. Oliphant's command of quiet humor and that gentle, sub-acid quality which is not satire or irony, but which answers the purpose of either. *A Country Gentleman* introduces one of the most outrageous prigs in existence—a young man spoiled by his woman relatives. He marries a widow of an affectionate disposition, of perfect manners and knowledge of the world—a country gentlewoman with a touch of *haute noblesse.* Mrs. Oliphant is much at home in her delineation of these persons, who live in those quiet, harmonious, luxurious interiors which she loves as backgrounds. She has no equal

in her understanding of the social "business" of life, and no superior in her manner of describing a well-bred woman. Her domestic comedies and tragedies are not brought about by the vulgar sensationalism of chance. They arise from the conflict or harmony of character, as they do in real life. *A House Divided against Itself* is a sequel to *A Country Gentleman.* The prig has lived a lonely life, apart from his wife, in the Riviera. His daughter Frances is with him; his daughter Constance, and his step-son, Lord Markham, the main cause of his separation from his wife, have remained with their mother in London. Frances is a simple and sweet young girl, brought up by an Italian nurse. Her amazement when she finds herself transported from the simplicity of Italian life to the artificiality of London is great. She cannot understand the innuendoes of those around her, half-tolerant, half condemnatory, of the immoral lives of the young men she meets and hears of. Her honesty and purity have their effects, one of which is the reconciliation of her father and mother, although the reader who has followed them carefully cannot help wondering how long this will last. Mrs. Oliphant needs only the light of faith to make the best of her stories the best examples of what good modern novel ought to be. But if she does not give faith its rightful place in life, she is at least very reverent. No words of hers wounds the Catholic heart; if she is ever satirical at the expense of anything having the appearance of religion, it is when she finds the materialism of the English Establishment a tempting object, or its inconsistencies a theme for her fine humor. It is a question whether Mrs. Oliphant can write too much; like Trollope, she can never exhaust her themes while Englishmen live and act comedies and tragedies in every-day life.

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